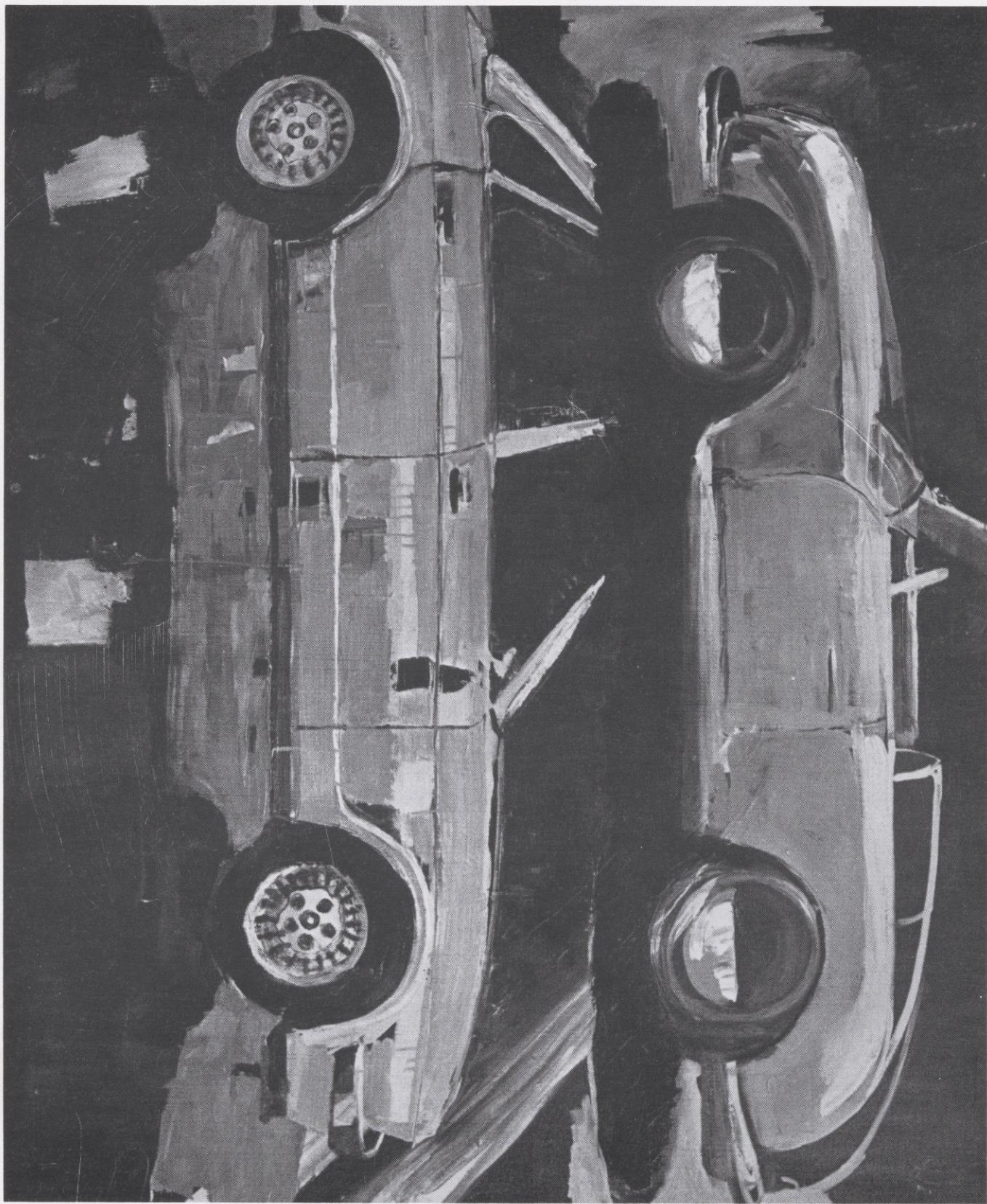


S.F.A.I.

c. 1-1991

# JOURNAL



Fall/Winter 1990-91

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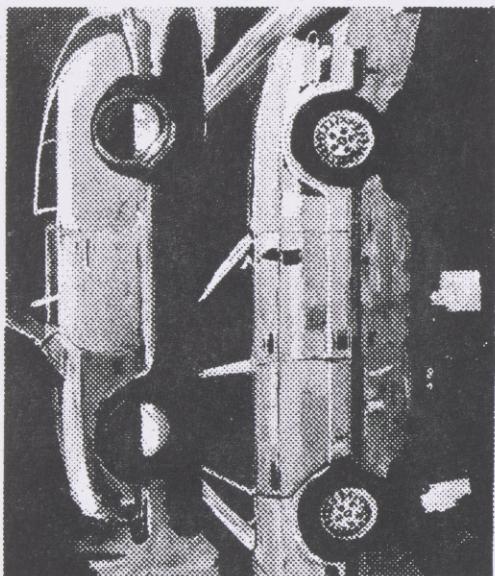
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### **To Our Readers:**

*The intent of the S.F.A.I. JOURNAL is to promote the work and writings by the members of the SFAI community and to allow a means by which everyone (including faculty and associates of the institute) can be heard.*

*We wish to thank everyone for submitting the writings and images reproduced in this issue; and we wish to encourage people to submit work and writings for the next issue, (regretably the different departments are not sufficiently represented.)*

*The traditional styling of the journal is done in part to contrast the usual scrapbook type publication which seems only be understood by the people who produced it. We want to create an interest in our school and students to people outside of our "little world" by presenting a more formal publication.*

*We would also like to thank the people at **MACADAM COMPUTER** for their advice, patience, understanding and use of their computers needed to make this first edition possible*

***The Editors***

#### **On The Cover:**

*Ed Beardley, "October", oil on canvas, 62"x 72"*

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# JOURNAL

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## **Whats Up?**

*by Bill Barrett, President*

A faculty committee has been meeting to discuss the future of the SFAI curriculum. When news of this spread, people became curious (perhaps even worried) about what was in store. As a result, the student editors of this journal asked me to describe what was going on. I hope you will allow a slightly broader scope to my reply.

Since most students have been here less than four years, it is rarely known or remembered that SFAI came close to closing around 1985-86, due to increasing deficits and declining enrollment. Under a sound long range plan (1987-90), we spent three years stabilizing and repairing the school: eliminating deficit budgets; stabilizing enrollment; improving the buildings; increasing staff to normal levels; building the Board of Trustees; reaching out to the community; increasing scholarships; and (most important) analyzing what needs to be done to improve the school.

The school came back from the brink. But now it is at a watershed moment. Achieving stability is not enough. We need to achieve major progress in our programs, and to reinvest in our equipment and facilities, if we are to remain a

leading art school. To accomplish this, a new Long Range Plan (1990-93) has been approved (copies are in the library). I'd like to describe its key objectives.

When we speak of the curriculum we really mean two related topics; the more philosophical issue of educational purpose and approach, and then the more physical embodiment of that philosophy in a series of classes and the like. This fall the faculty committee is dealing with curricular issues which we have already identified as needing attention, including : more interdisciplinary focus to encourage more interdisciplinary work; greater challenge, differentiation, and flexibility in the later stages of study here; more variety and electives in L&S; and a re-examination of core classes for freshmen and transfers.

The intention is to have the faculty approve modifications to the curriculum this winter, for implementation next fall. At the same time, there is no intention to eliminate the foundation or uniqueness of our curriculum - motivation by challenge, working with students as individuals, intensive studio focus, and a greater emphasis on

expression and meaning than on skills.

A second phase of this examination will begin in the spring and will have a "futures" orientation. We are planning a major symposium in April, open to the SFAI community. It is designed to get us thinking about art and education in the 21st Century, and how we can do a better job of preparing artists for that future. Out of it we hope will come new ideas about the direction and structure of our offerings, something we can use over time to bring about a useful and appropriate evolution of our curriculum. I have no idea what, if any, new directions will appear. I only know it is worth asking questions.

We do many things well right now, and do not want to undermine the strength of our programs. On the other hand, the curriculum really hasn't been analyzed for 20 years, and many of us feel that nothing is so good that it cannot be improved. I should also mention that the same sort of analysis will take place this spring in terms of public programs (exhibitions, lectures, etc.), with an eye towards the same kind of future thinking.

These new initiatives represent a major part of the Long Range Plan. The other part has to do with equipment, facilities, and endowment, for which the Board has approved three new, interconnected activities. The first is a special gifts committee of the Board, being organized right now, to raise funds to address the pent up equipment needs of SFAI. I am sure I don't need to tell you what 20 years of deficits have left us with in the way of equipment. We hope to start whittling the list down in the next six months.

The second step is approval of the completion of a building master plan, designed to address issues of seismic safety, ventilation, handicapped access, heat, crowding and security. In early 1991 we will begin the process of selecting an architect to complete the master plan, after which we will have to carry out a campaign to raise the money to

renovate the buildings.

Finally, The Board approved the first steps of a campaign designed to increase the size of the endowment, so as to produce more and more stable funding each year. In addition, the plan calls for more financial aid each year, as well as a significant increase in annual fundraising by the Board and staff.

In sum, the Board and administration believe that this school is not strong unless it is continually



Wha Lin Hsu, "Scorpio", oil on paper, 36" x 48"

improving itself. The steps outlined above are designed to bring about progress and enhancement in areas where we have heretofore been deficient. I urge you to review the Plan in the Library, and to see me or other senior staff if you have questions of concerns. Many thanks.

# A New Curriculum

by Fred Martin, Dean of Academic Affairs

## **Question: Why Now?**

**Answer:** The year 2000 is approaching, and although the particular number of a year has little to do with our daily lives, so magical a number 2000 calls for some other magic also like, imagining a new curriculum in the fine arts.

## **Q: What is a curriculum?**

**A:** A curriculum is an organized sequence of learning experiences. It is like life in that it is experience; it is unlike life in that it is experience structured toward a goal. The goal of experience at SFAI is to educate the fine artist with the resources of ideas and skills, information and insight necessary for personally and socially meaningful work in the art of present and the future.

## **Q: Why a "new" curriculum?**

**A:** Because every day is new, and because all structures must be forever renewed.

## **Q: What are we doing about a new curriculum?**

**A:** First, immediately, to look at what we are and what we do, consider its pressure points, and do something about them. (We won't be in shape for the year 2000 unless we keep in shape now). To that purpose, I have been meeting with a "Committee for a New Curriculum" to make plans which we can present to the Trustees

## **Q. How do we proceed?**

**A.** Like this: We keep what we know works

- Intensive studio focus
- Work with each student as an individual
- Teach skills (the "basics") only as needed for expression and meaning
- Motivate students by challenge

• "Support" students only enough for them to survive the last challenge and meet the next; motivate students to strive to surpass themselves.

## **We listen to what students say about their learning experience at SFAI:**

- "After the first year or two here, it's only

more of the same."

• "I want to work among various media; the department makes me be only a photographer (painter, filmmaker, etc.)"

## **We listen to what faculty say about their teaching experience at SFAI:**

• "Classes where beginners are mixed with advanced students result in beginners being left out, or advanced students being bored. It makes a class of twenty students turn into twenty classes of one student each."

• "Interdisciplinary work is everywhere at SFAI except in the way the majors are described in the catalog."

• "Lots of my best teaching is done one-to-one, outside of class, talking with students not only about their work in my class, but about themselves as artists and their work as a whole."

• "First semester transfer students are just as lost as first semester freshmen."

## **Goals to be included in curriculum change:**

1. Make real differences between beginning, intermediate and advanced courses in order to keep up student motivation, so that student privileges correspond with student development, and because a more homogeneous class facilitates more effective teaching.

2. Encourage interdisciplinary work as appropriate to student interest and level of development.

3. Create a more flexible teacher/student interface to:

- a. Free students and faculty from rigid class schedules to the extent possible and accountable, and as appropriate to the subject, teaching method and level of the course.

- b. Free students as appropriate to their levels of development from rigid class schedules to the extent possible and accountable.

## **Q: So What are you proposing?**

**A:** In response to issues of "After.... it's only more of the same," and "...the department makes me be only" and "Interdisciplinary work is everywhere except in the way majors are described," and "first semester transfer students are just as lost as..."

**The Committee has proposed:**

1. **A Junior Seminar**, open only to and elective for Juniors, focussing on students work with faculty drawn from all departments including LS and Art History, team taught to combine studio and theoretical issues. The purpose of the seminars would be to establish cross-major, cross discipline (studio and academic) dialogue, bringing to bear information and insight from both the studio and academic worlds. The seminar would be open only to Juniors, and in this way would meet the question of "only more of the same;" its interactive focus on studio issues as well as theoretical critique would address interdisciplinary concerns which transcend the studio focus of most interdisciplinary programs.

2. **A Senior Thesis Seminar** open only to and required of Seniors, where 3 studio faculty, each from a different department, would team teach a seminar culminating in a "Thesis Review" of student work much in the manner of the final reviews in the Graduate Program. At the end of the Thesis Review, each student would be given a written response to his/her work from each faculty member in the seminar. As a Senior Seminar, the course would address the "only more of the same" issue, and as a required Senior Review Course, would address the "assessment of outcomes" issues beginning to be raised by accrediting agencies.

3. **A Series of "Short Courses"** (1/2 semester) would be set up to add variety to the curricular offerings. These would be open only to upper division students, would be in studio, LS and Art History, and would be special subjects— color theory or anatomy, the Zone System or the view camera, the Art of the Baroque Period of of Contemporary China, the Sociology of the Communist State or of the 20th century Africa... any specialized subject of direct interest but limited time. These might also include "basic how to" courses in some departments where specific technical knowledge of equipment is necessary before beginning any interdisciplinary work involving the department's resources.

4. **A seminar called "Personal Process"** would be established to deal with the issue of the integra-



*Samuel Roloff, "Untitled", Painted Ceramic, 26"*

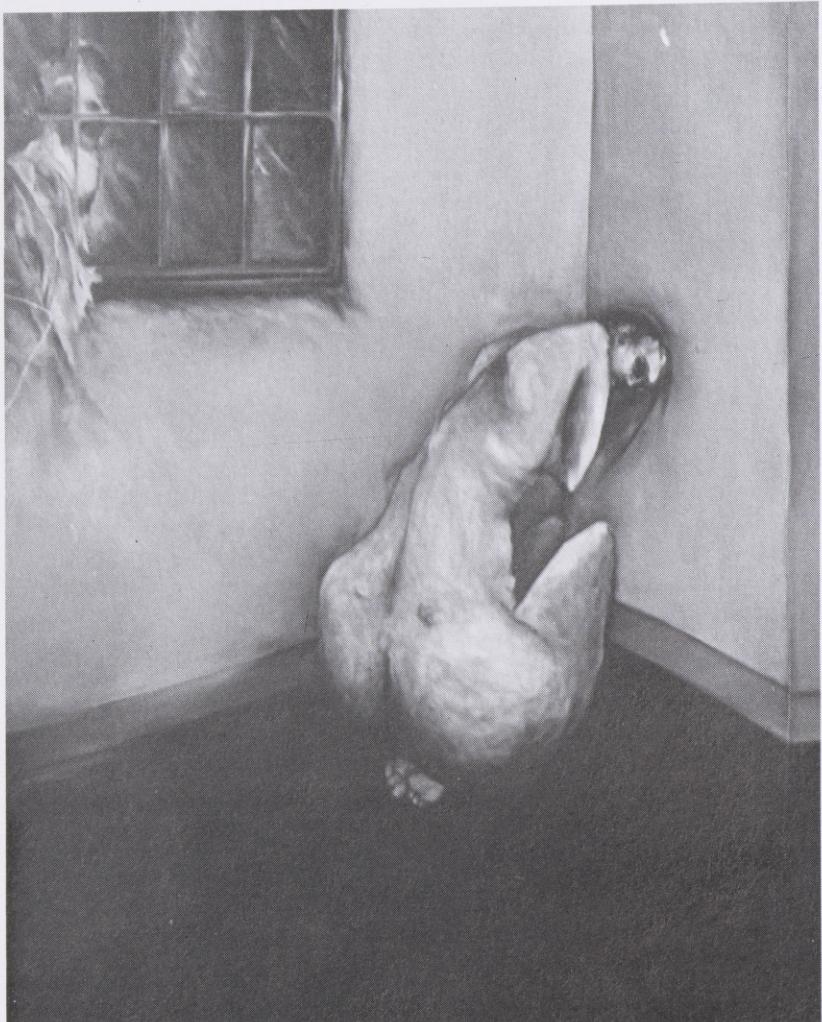
tion of transfer students into the SFAI community. The Admissions Office would evaluate student needs at the time of acceptance, and would advise the appropriate students to enroll for the class. It would not be a requirement or condition of admission. The class would offer a structured investigation of personal image search and development. There would be two class meetings per week; the first a lecture with appropriate assignments, the second a critique and discussion of completed assignments.

***Q: If these things might happen in the next year or two, what about the BIG PICTURE in the year 2000?***

**A:** We are planning a symposium to be held in April, 1991 on the Education of Artists in the year 2000. We plan to have speakers and resource people, artists, critics and "futurists" in philosophy, technology, sociology and what it is we do, to discuss what we might do in the century to come.

***Q: If we have any ideas about this, who do we see?***

**A:** See student representatives Wendy Coons or Neil Boyette, faculty Jeremy Morgan, Janis Lipton, Tony Labet, Reagan Louie or Richard Berger, or Fred Martin.



Lisa J. Farrel, "ALICE", oil on canvas, 60"x72"

## "Midterm Blues"

by Chuck Tesmer

### *To Students with Learning Disabilities:*

As I began to prepare for the midterm exam in Art History, I wondered if things would be different this time. I had not taken a test in school for over 13 years, and what I remember of that experience is that no matter how hard I worked, school work was almost always difficult, and my grade often did not reflect my effort. Hoping that things had changed, I assumed that if I did the work I was asked to do and studied like everyone else, things would be different this time.

So I did just that. I studied the slides, did the readings, the quizzes that went with them, and then did some review. I went into the mid-term test feeling I had done the work.

Despite my preparation, I struggled with the

test. My dyslexia was clearly affecting my ability to answer the questions. I knew that the pictures I saw were important and the questions relevant, and my visual memory of the specific facts that supported them was very limited. I just barely passed the test with a D-.

I have come to know over the years since I was last in school that I'm not stupid because of a poor grade I am given. I do feel angry, though, that after having worked hard I did not learn what I was asked, and wanted, to learn and that a judgement was placed on the value of my work "D-."

I have a problem. My problem is not that I have a learning disability, or learning difference as I like to call it. My problem, and the problem other students have told me they have, is getting help to learn how they learn and then the support to do that. At this point there is very little being done to help, and in general there is a lack of knowledge and understanding, both by the faculty and the students of learning differences and the number of students affected by them.

There are ways to make learning for those with learning differences easier, more successful and enjoyable. I'm personally tired of having to work twice as hard as the average person to do the same job, get a D- and not learn. I can learn. I'm an intelligent person, not stupid. When I was tested and diagnosed dyslexic, I also tested to be in the top ten percentile on an IQ test. The difference for me is that I perceive the world differently, as do most artists I know. I'm no longer willing to settle for substandard education that is the result of a lack of knowledge or interest in these facts.

This problem is extensive here at SFAI. I have spoken to teachers, students and from my own experience I believe that as many as 25% of the students here have some form of learning differences, and that is probably a low estimate.

Some of what we know we need to facilitate learning for us are things like computers with spell checkers, having tutors who can work with us as we learn what it takes for us to learn, then help creatively in developing new forms of doing so, as well as facilitating talks with faculty to engage

these different learning formats, study groups, readings on tape, oral tests, special classes geared toward students with different learning needs. I'm sure this is just a small part of what we can do, and I think we will learn more as we go on.

The thing we need the most is for those people who need help to let us know that. We need to show the school how many of us are out there. If we can do that, I believe that they will have to listen to us and give the financial support we need to do things differently.

I know from my own experience that it is not easy to ask for help, especially when in the past I've needed help and been looked down on as if there was some things wrong with me, like I was stupid. You can get support for those feelings, too.

There is a group of us, both students and faculty who understand and can help. You just need to ask.

**PLEASE** We need your help as much as you need ours. Whether you're diagnosed with a learning difference or not, you can get help. Just come to our group on Monday, noon, in the conference room or talk to someone in the Counselling Center or Student Affairs.

*Jill McCaw, oil on canvas, 48"x 48"*



#### EDITORS NOTE

***The SFAI JOURNAL wants to hear from you.... Issues that you feel need to be discussed, comments on the JOURNAL or responses to articles published in the journal ---drop all letters or articles in the box in front of the student store.***

## Commentary:

*Necessarily Anonymous*

Have we ever wondered why there are no great woman role models among the instructors here at SFAI? I have. It's not that I haven't given four of them a try. I've run into ego trips, competition, sexism, insecurity and lies. Why is it that you get A's from male instructors and B's from female instructors for the same work? Why are all the female instructors "young?" The nuturing and insight and aid come mostly from the older male instructors. Is this a set-up? Yes! But one wonders why. Why are these women hired, as opposed to really HOT inspiring ones? Does it have something to do with competition or lack of competition? Who would be threatened by strong, mature, competent, humanistic women in teaching positions? Why the male dominated administration of course.

I am not a rabid feminist, by any means, but the differences between male and female teaching among the staff are painfully obvious. The demise of Joan Brown and Jae DeFeo sadly reduces the imput of intelligent women in the local art world. Surely there are strong women artists who can work alongside the present strong male faculty here, who can provide the women students here with some positive inspiration.

# Dear The United States,

by Geoffrey Farmer

Everyone has deserted their own countries to come to America. The entire population is in the United States, it is very crowded, but everyone fits. There is hardly any food or water, everywhere you look there are people, but everyone stays, nobody wants to leave because in America you are free.

## Dear California,

There is a migration of all the mattresses that exist, to California. They are carried or brought by vans, here to California. Nobody wants to make mattresses anymore, none are made, they are just collected and stacked in huge columns. The freeways are jammed with them, nobody can drive, it is definitely hard to walk or move. A group of children have built a floating island with them, up to thirty of them can live on it at one time. In America anything is possible.

## Dear San Francisco,

The air is improving. A lot of people are here and because of the language difficulties everyone just hums, everyone is dreaming of driving. All the dogs have vanished, only a couple of cats exist. Nobody is scared, everyone is very brave.

## Dear School,

All the studios are being used as storage areas for mattresses, the courtyard is the only free space. All the art supplies have run out so nobody can make art. All the artist are on the floor sleeping, and dreaming of dogs, of painting and of driving. Nobody smokes, the tiles have been taken from the fish pond.

## Dear Journal,

Everyone is restless and tired, nobody can move, a lot of people are hungry and thirsty. I haven't seen a cloud for months and everyday they say it is going to rain.

*BROKEN SOUNDS  
OF AIR  
ESCAPE  
AS MY RAZORED  
HAND  
CUTS THROUGH  
YOUR WATER  
DRAWING YOUR  
HEART POUND*

## **S W A C K**

*REVERBERATING THE STILL  
CHASING HALLS SWARM  
FOOTFALLS DESCEND  
ECHOING A MOMENT  
THAT SEEKS REFERENCE  
WITHOUT FACILITY  
BENDING AWAY*

## *HIDING*

*ENCAPSULATED  
EASY GLIDE  
SWALLOWS  
INVITE  
ENGULF  
EXPEL*

*CLICKING TONGUES  
DILUTE FLAVORED  
FAMILIARS  
TO REST IN SHADOWED  
UNKNOWNNS*

*SLEEPING AWAY HISTORY  
SURCEASING TIME  
DIMINISHING EXISTENCE  
FORTIFYING INTERNAL QUIETS  
MARKING POINTS OF PURPOSE  
AWAKE AND URGENT*

*Xylor*

*Swane*



Ed Beardley, "January", oil on canvas, 72" x 72"

Great trees tower above  
 Madonna barbed wire  
 Madonna barbed wire lived in the  
 woods  
 on the north side of Barrett mountain.  
 She liked to pick berries and make  
 carrot soup.  
 The day of the punch was Thursday,  
 Nov. 3rd  
 when she developed plastic explosives.  
 She was blown to bits when she first hit  
 her  
 new plastic nail with her new plastic  
 hammer.  
 Apples and oranges hovered above the  
 largest  
 chunk of her remains  
 Apples and oranges  
 pineapple upside down  
 cake

-Babbling Haze-

Our scales glazed in the queen's pollen we  
 linger over a green limestone terrace our legs  
 spread to the sun silken sea sponges we hold its  
 rays ti'll night when the cool caress of the moon  
 licks the salt off our legs We anoint each other  
 in sandal wood, walnut and rosemary to our legs  
 we attach leafs of vellum blood red scribed in  
 ash luminations of the burning times beneath our  
 skin we feel an itching our nostrils become dilated  
 our bellies churn acid We begin to remember  
 -Monica Novak

#### The Sounds of Wade Vs. Roe

The door closed  
 There was something -  
 Now it is gone.  
 Silence?  
 No.  
 Listen, listen -  
 I hear my heart beat.

-Laura Ell



Jamie Pennington  
"Memphis"  
Silver Gelatin Print, 16" x 20"

## *The Surfaces of Modernism*

by John Rapko

Much recent historical thinking has investigated the structures of what one might call the 'uneventful', those submerged structures of feeling and patterns of practice which stretch across time. Neither visible nor invisible, the uneventful is reproduced anonymously as people cope with secular necessities. The uneventful is a kind of sediment produced when hope rubs nature. Discourse articulates the uneventful through contemporary concerns, and occasionally fashions an image which survives its refutations. At the beginning of the epoch we can call our own, Gotthold Lessing imagined the trial of the experimental attitude: "if God held all truth in his right hand and in his left the everlasting striving after truth, so that I should always and everlasting be mistaken, and said to me, "Choose" . . . Possessing the truth makes one a lazy bore; lessing let God hold that bag.

Uneventful experimentalism is an attitude, a style of action, a way of life, which refuse to accumulate, refuses to succeed; where others see a secure truth, the experimentalist sees a dogma

settling in. Modernism hijacked the experimental attitude and tied it to the concept of progress and leading tendencies in history. Even tendencies need an advocate, and so the avant-garde was born. Early on, when modernism rode the waves of industrialization and urban engineering, its claim to be the vanguard of humanity seemed irresistible. Later, modernism came to be identified with rarefied end game strategies, requiring increasingly extreme negations to purge itself of the untimely, the resistant, and the junk of history. The drive for purity replaced the link with social forces. With Rauschenberg and Johns, junk got its dialectical revenge: the so-called drive for purity turned out to be a hopeless attempt to adorn the loss of content and purpose. The invisible wall between art and the social world broke, and the world flooded the canvas. We're still working out the consequences. I want to consider the experimental style of artistic practice which responds to the entrenchment of commodities in everyday life. Most art-critical thinking about commodities

begins and ends with Marx's great discussion of the fetishism of commodities in the first volume of *Capital*. According to Marx, with capitalism, objects become commodities when produced by alienated labor and sold. Commodities then take on a fascinating sense of self-production and self-movement, their "theological capers." Citing this discussion, art-criticism then typically denounces commodification of works of art and equates this truism with de-fetishisation of commodities. This moralizing *non sequitur* tacitly uses a criterion of unworldly purity which is otherwise rejected. In order to understand contemporary aesthetic experimentalism, we need a richer account of what commodities are.

Firstly, a commodity is part of an historical sequence oriented towards greater efficiency: from reel-to-reel tape to LP to CD, the function of the commodity (the reproduction of sound) is relatively stable, while the commodity becomes increasingly more durable and reliable. Secondly, the technology which supports the commodity becomes increasingly hidden and complex; the commodity is user-friendly while the technology is a matter for EXPERTS. The connection between the commodity and its technological environment cannot be inferred from visual inspection. Thirdly, the disengagement of the commodity's function from its technology allows an arbitrary diversification of the commodity's surface: the commodity can be any size, shape, or color the consumer wishes. Thus the entrenchment of commodities in everyday life brings with it a means/ends rationality, where ends are given and means arbitrary and infinite; a tendency to block everyday inferences from an object to its structure; and a tendency for questions of individual taste to replace questions of function, coping, and improvement. "any contemporary works of art celebrate and play upon these tendencies, but I can't bring myself to call them experimental."

The work I'm concerned with begins with a concern for the commodity, and thinks it in terms of its surface. The commodity's surface is an opaque, colored, transferable skin, a block to thinking, and an invitation to use. This surface is encountered within the reach of one's hand. The sweep of the hand marks out a zone of trust within which one can act with confidence. The sureness gives us a sense of security so intimate that we feel consubstantial with what we use. We also have flesh outside our skin. Our routines of using

artefacts constitute our social body, which is assigned its place within institutions and social practices. The old question "Who am I?" becomes the social question "With what am I consubstantial?"

The model of the post-modernist canvases of Rauschenberg sets up the metaphor of treating the canvas as the surface of a commodity. The post-modernist canvas suffers; it registers the forces of its context (Frank Stella's canvas acts only because it's been exploded). Starting from the commodity, the painter can take the route through nature. The painter Dianne Andrews Hall, for example, undoes the inferential opacity of the commodity through a meditation on the horizon. There is no experience of fulfillment for one approaching the horizon. The horizon is the most-observer-dependent of all natural phenomena - inevitable yet fragile, instantly responding to one's movements. Nothing occludes the horizon; occlusion only creates a different horizon. In the late 1980's Hall used the most controlled means, a flat, monochrome brushstroke, to produce the sense that the horizon is just the broadest case of the relation of contiguous planes. The stroke acknowledges the deliberateness of the act of attention, the construction of the foci of the visual field. The opacity of the surface becomes the revelation of the patient intelligence which produced it. Hall understands the visual phenomenologically; that is, vision is an encounter within a given situation, where vision and object are locked in an orderly improvised dance. This style of visual understanding is then applied to an opaque surface. A space of possibility opens up; there is another way of responding to opacity.

Similarly, in the poetry of Leslie Scalapino, opacity is understood as the primary attribute of social encounters. The sense that things are "not quite right" fuels the drive for articulation. Scalapino's broken, rhythmic clauses seem to spiral towards their object as they turn away from the phenomenon's opacity. Scalapino approaches a phrase the way Cecil Taylor approaches a motif: the seemingly rigid unit is shaken from within, in order to open it for a broader involvement.

Both Hall and Scalapino work with primarily visual surfaces. Another experimentalist route to surface is primarily tactile. Touching an opaque surface, we gain a sense of hidden density, of a weight which is formed yet invisible. The surface's resistance delivers the sense of an *intensity* of control in grasping something for of the object and of my

own body. If I open the object in order to see the mystery of the interior, I only create more surfaces, and more hiddenness. Margo Adams includes collages objects from decorative materials, breaking up their endless industrial patterns and treating each chunk as a sculptural material. The glossy patterns solicit one's look, yet one is never allowed to settle into rhythmic scanning. The gaze continually runs up against the edge of the swatch. The work avoids the mainstream post-modernist attempt to animate surfaces through the play of internal ironies. Instead her attempt is to tame the desire for visual appropriation and fix attention upon a manipulation which reveals non-visual depth.

In her poetry Jean Day figures the page in a like manner, as architectural volume which provides the site of encounters provoking thought: "but words stand architecturally poised, always already/ an argument." Social opacity is glossed as an opportunity for an engagement which creates the self as something further on, revealed through resistance. The kind of depth revealed through touch is understood as the spring of desire, not for an original unity but for experimental openness. The opacity of surfaces is taken up as a fundamentally erotic relation of individual to individual: "the natural world arouses itself / to the form that is / and not another thing."

If these post-modernist re-inventions of experimentalism all start from the opacity of surfaces, perhaps it is because of their sense of the world as choked with images without depth, funnelled through social institutions and clashing in public space. For an individual artist, political questions appear primarily as questions of taste and tact. Taste as a social phenomenon is the art of exclusion; shared objects of delight and disgust help maintain a community as distinct from other social groups. Tact is the art of inconspicuously negotiating between different social groups and between the various social groups of which any individual is a member. Always the realm of appearances, politics becomes in part the art of controlling images. The surfaces of artists are likewise part of this realm and accordingly are sites of social contestation.

## **Painting**

**1.**

*The brush feels firm  
in my fist, moving  
through paint.  
A wand.  
A broom.  
Like an old Sinatra song  
I ride straight to the moon,  
dance between the stars.  
I'll gladly fly this brush,  
painting home to bed.  
A colorful menage,  
we'll manage on sticky kisses,  
silly puns.  
A little yellow on the underthigh,  
another star stroke,  
toughing my skin,  
as if a canvas  
mouthing my breast,  
kissed me, into  
ultramarine blue, phthalocyanine  
green, acid yellow, ecstasy.*

**2**

*Does it look right?  
The next day everything looks wrong.  
last night's lovemaking  
has left its confused scars  
of candleburns, stained sheets,  
ruined cloths.  
The canvas sags, moans,  
pukes, yellow, green.  
I am furious.  
The brush is an axe,  
a hammer.  
Hair standing up  
Like a scared cat,  
I wack away while he yowls.*

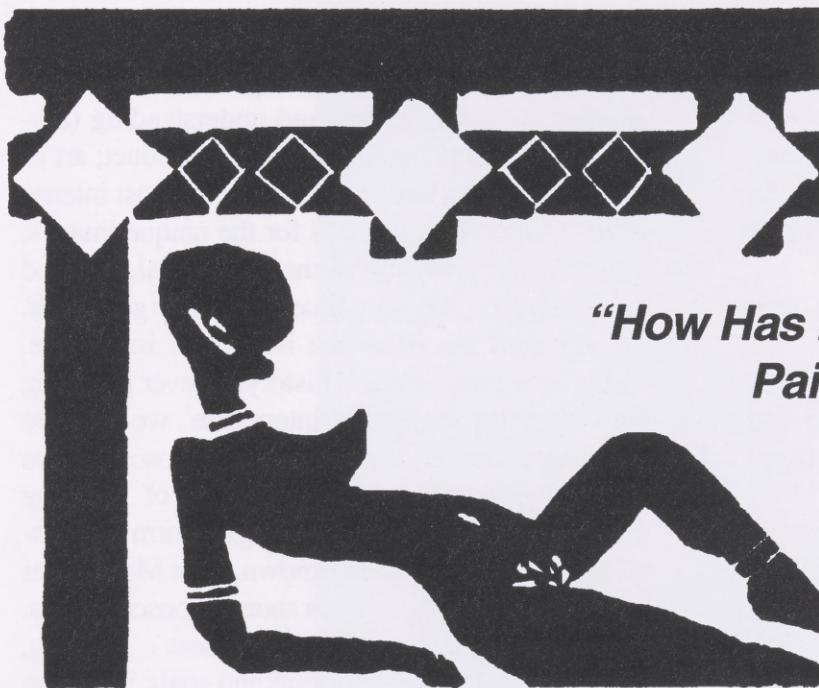
**3.**

*Can this painting be saved?  
I look, examine, critique,  
an astronomer,  
a marriage counselor.  
Colors, shapes, motives,  
defined, described.  
The brush is a scalpel.  
Competent as a plastic surgeon  
I reshape a purple eye.*

**4.**

*Well it's not perfect.  
It's not the moon on a silver platter.  
It's not a startipped wand.  
It's not a feather bed.  
It's a bent mirror.  
It's spinning coin toss rhythm,  
a swirling kaleidoscope.  
Look in, the shaken bits  
of broken color, reflected,  
make the circle whole.*

- Leah Korican



## **"How Has Post-Modernism Effected Painting Students at S.F.A.I.?"**

by Jeremy Morgan

*Suzanne Stackle,  
"Untitled",  
lino-cut, 4" x 5"*

**T**here is no all encompassing answer to such a question. Within the question is evidence of contributing factors. Firstly perhaps it is a

matter of definitions, descriptions, as illustrating a context for understanding.

What is Post Modernism? It is supposedly less a cohesive movement as it is a "state of things". It is a label which is significant in that it creates a means of comprehension, and as a term, evokes a myriad of forms, comprising the socio.- aesthetic concerns of a decade of creative activity.

I had the opportunity this past May to participate, (along with Fred Martin and Bruce McGaw), in a symposium on the Education of painters at the A.I.C.A. New York Studio. Representing 38 schools or university departments of Art were over one hundred artists - educators, a distinguished advisory panel. (Kuspit, Dants, Ratcliff, Smith and more) and various support groups who met in open discussion and in separate working groups. The mission of each group was to discuss various topics relating to the teaching of painting. Amongst the topics for discussion were, The Bodies Politic, Craft Mastery and Anti- Mastery, Painting Moderns and Post Moderns ( What role does art history play in relation to

contemporary theory). Is Painting a Profession or a calling? Whichever the case, who teaches and how? Pluralism and Difference.

*Today... Modern Art is beginning to lose its power of negation. For some years now its rejections have been ritual repetitions; rebellion has turned into procedure, criticism into rhetoric, transgression into ceremony. Action is no longer creative. I am not saying that we are living the end of art....are living the end of the idea of Modern Art..... Octavia Paz*

The keynote address was delivered by artist and teacher/writer Robert Storr (a visitor to S.F.A.I in 1989). The focus of this address was a brief but revealing summary of Art education establishments, the Academies of Europe, the schools and university dept. of Europe and the U.S.A. It also addressed the issue of Post Modernism, its intentions its *raison-d'etre*. At one juncture he posits the view; when pondering the open question, "shall we teach Post-Modernism" by paring it down to, "How shall we teach Modernism", how shall we deal with it in all its complexity - the issue Modernism encompassed before this streamlining took place? He then proposed in general a curriculum, and I severely edit the lucid proposal; given limitations of time and space. A. Students should learn the history of Art Institutions, museums patronage, and art press - in essence he suggested that through becoming conversant with

Art Schools and their evolution, their failures and strengths, they would equally understand the function of such institutions.

B. The history of Art writing - a suggestion was made that the Artist's writing (rather than that of Art Historians) should be read first - then a survey of the history of criticism and aesthetics.

C. A survey of the history of Art in relation to other Arts (literature and other disciplines)

D. An enlightened and re-defined historical survey which would involve both the understanding and significance of women and non-European based cultures.

Through an elasticity of approach through a more complete socio- aesthetic accountability would emerge a more aware individual one with a more complex and subtle understanding of his/her context, (personal, societal, global).

In a latter part of his address Storr (referring to painting) stated, 'In so far that it has an essence, that essence is its discursiveness, its capacity to embrace a variety of contradictory elements or attitudes or materials. Hence painting is not a fixable reality, and although sometimes beautiful or graceful, it is decidedly not a transcendent or other-worldly one. As Post Modernist criticism has reminded us in a positive way, modernism as a whole and Modernist painting in particular will be impure and imperfect. These mystifications are its ultimate guarantee against exhaustion.'

Baudrillard - Deconstruction - revisionism - appropriation- Salle - Schnabel - Levine, words and names; the landscape is endless, the words, acute, poignant, and catalytic, and equally caustic, grievous and self prophetic. For Post Modernism and its relative significance to society and the creative act, of musing or meaning as a struggle for credibility, and or the recognition of the fallacy of such, was a term ascribed firstly by Charles Jencks to architecture, and a revision of the aesthetics of that activity. It was as if somehow at some point these disparate (seemingly) functions and structures within culture were actually at a point of semi or total exhaustion. A re-appraisal, a shift of gear, and a new prospectus was being sought. Image makers and there were legions, from Europe and America were re-discovering the evolution of image making; its sources and its meaning; the image had been forsaken for process; formalism was the semi-colon in a long and varied 'essay'.

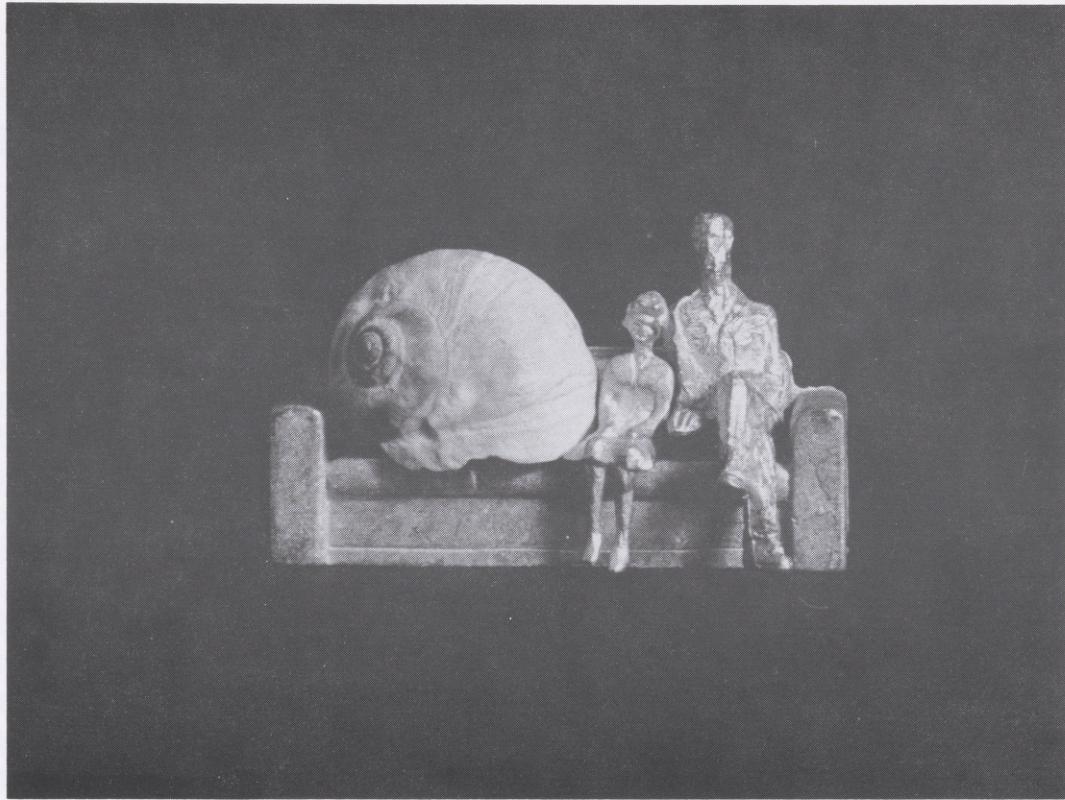
There was a tangible pause and then a serge

a sea-change or was it that something altogether more subliminal was occurring; a re-orientation, another quest for context and understanding (aesthetic/ social accountability) Art as product; art as commodity, had likewise assumed its most intense guise. Astronomical prices for the unique images; artists as the purveyor of the immaterial, peddled ultimately as a rarity and valued more than gold itself.

Art both describes and is born of its culture. Cultures, movements and history, an ever pulsating amoebic entity we see, we internalize , we feel , we make, we question, we answer , we philosophize we confront enigmas, or declare a state of knowing through the act of painting. We give form to intangible or we manipulate the known. Post Modernism is the state of things, as it is a state of consciousness. Art is made in a state of consciousness . Painting, particularly whatever its origins and goals, is a union between the physical and non-physical, matter and spirit, give it what names you have a predilection for, it is about a bringing into being that which was not there previously, it may echo passed endeavors or it may enter new terrain, it is made because of an internal necessity, from a passion quiet or grandiose. It is made within a context, it affirms or ultimately questions that context, The individual remains the individual. Painting in its ultimately silent migration from physicality to response, is viable ; it is a point, an origin of contemplation and in its silence is born its innate beauty and meaning. How and why it moves us is its ultimate secret. We look, we see, we understand, we perceive and we make decisions; we select and we engage.

Post Modernism is a consciousness of the history of ideas, of aesthetics, of volition, of motive, of cultures , its icons, its quests ; it is only a name for a state of knowing that which existed before and shall remain after the naming has ended. Our responsibility as artists is to locate ourselves, discover our own truths and amplify them through the activity ... our responsibility is to be aware, and in that state of consciousness should be implicit the notion of choice free from constraints without perimeters, with guidelines found within ourselves.

If it has something tangible it is that Post Modern thinking and aesthetics encourage pluralism, questioning and at best explores the multitude of possibilities of how art can be made. It is full of best it detracts not at all from painting at worst it can be rejected - how it may aid the artist is as personal, *continued on page 39.....MORGAN*



Pamela Brody, "My Father Never Appreciated My Creativity", Silver Gelatin Print, 8"x 6"

### SARA KINKY CUT HER HAIR

Sara Kinky cut her hair,  
Sara Kinky-Oh-So-Fair.

Aspiring queen of high ballet,  
We never thought we'd see the day,  
She'd cut her silken locks away.  
Exotic beauty to enhance  
Her perfect plastic willow-dance  
Source behind her spider-trance;  
Like lacy webs stretched out to catch  
Some molded modeled manly wretch,  
A flawless husband she might fetch.  
The golden silk a gift from God,  
Extensions of her clean facade,  
Now a bouncing Betty-bob.

Sara Kinky cut her hair,  
Sara Kinky-Too-Aware.

Sara Kinky-Oh-So-Cool  
Is saving up to go to school  
Working as a Cafe stool.  
Espresso, cappuccino, tea:  
Props of her reality,  
The tools she hopes will set her free  
From ugliness, unpleasaness,  
Disappointment, family stress,  
Misery she'll not confess.  
Her hair her only saving grace  
Frames a stoic icy face  
The precious diamond to encase;

To hold, protect and lock away  
Her desperate dreams, her world of gray,  
And never let her go astray  
Wander from her planned out life  
Free of conflict, trouble, strife:  
Clamor, glory, fortune's wife.

Sara Kinky cut her hair,  
How could she ever even dare?

Insidious little mental game  
Addled beaten scrambled brain  
Envied drama spite disdain;  
We stopped living on her stage,  
Animals in her circus cage,  
Kept for her to vent her rage  
Against approaching destiny,  
Her fate she knows we all can see,  
What she fears will come to be:  
Volvo, mansion, wedding ring,  
Husband hanging on a string,  
All the money he can bring,  
VCR and tennis court,  
Designer food of any sort,  
Breeding children just for sport.

Sara Kinky Cut Her Hair.  
It never even had a prayer.

-Andy Hausman,  
Celia Caricoux Melton

**For the Saddest Eyes I have Ever Seen**  
by Donna Han

*Crackly muzak rattles where  
No one is listening.  
Purple-hatted men pose for pictures.  
A golden eagle has died.  
Was this what I was searching for?*

*Clones of clones cast beady stares where  
No one is seeing.  
Dolled up children giggle with ignorance  
I smile  
But it is false.  
Who has been blinded today?*

*Shivering bohemians mumble where  
No one is loving.  
Indigo shadows capture the decay.  
One night I cried so much.  
Was this what I was hungry for?*

*Chink and gook and flatface sting where  
No one is listening.  
Stingy women play country songs nonstop.  
I kiss him  
But feel nothing.  
Who was driven to sanity today?*

*Lavendar bruises decorate flesh where  
No one is seeing.  
An ace of spades is lodged in my womb.  
Minute teardrops sparkle at night.  
Was this what I was hungry for?*

*Fornication fumes linger where  
No one is loving.  
Toy dogs are devoured for supper.  
I weep  
But do not care.  
Was this what I was searching for?*

**PoMo, Fashion and  
S.F.A.I.**

by Mark Van Proyen

What effect has post modernism had on the work at SFAI? Well if the work in question is teaching, then the effect is obvious — students now use more big words than their teachers. If the work is the “cultural production” of the institute’s student artists, then the effect is again obvious: what was once a world class repository of the most imaginative bathroom grafitti inscribed in something resembling english now is in decline. Why? Because students are now employing their genius for graffiti in the realms of classroom resuscitations of an avante-garde pretense called “text.”

On a more serious note, it seems to me that post modernism (or, PoMo as some wiseguy had it) hasn’t had much effect on the work done at SFAI. This is because the work at the ‘tute’ was never very responsive to the orthodox modernism that postmodern proposes to displace: “what you see is what you see” didn’t allow for the kind of extravagant imagination that the school’s best students sought to place at center stage. The education that the institute offers has always been predicated on the notion of art as the crystallization of experience — the bigger and more encompassing the experience, the better the art ... usually. The most common versions of post modernism say the same thing, but without the chest-thumpy spin of an individualistic Liebenphilosophie. Now, the artist is said to “sign” their experience by choosing estheticized “codes” from a pre-existing cultural menu — in effect, placing the final onus of creation on society rather than the artist. Fair enough, you might say; there needs to be more of that lifeblood called culture in art to give it meaning and vitality. Pure form is thought to be so antiseptic and sterile, so given over to the indulgence in spectacularism that leads to unflattering comparisons with the grander spectacles of the big wide world. The down side has to do with a simplistic, mass-media notion of culture that is understood as a series of information pictures rather than lived experiences. Yes Virginia, art imitates life.

Of course, all of this is really about fashion parading as a grand sea changes in the collective subjective. Most art historians would agree that much of the basic motivation of modernism lied in its symbolic rebellion against the tradition-bound values of bourgeois conformity. Now the situation is radically different because those traditional values are no longer operational, excepting those hysterical instances of Christian, Hebraic and Islamic fundamentalism that make our political climate so entertaining. What is operational as a replacement source of cultural authority is fashion, more specifically, the fashion industry, which the world of art well—serves as a kind of research—and—development department. Even though the artworld's denizens are inclined to strike self-congratulatory (albeit nosologic) poses of "radical" life-style, the fashion system of art prevails.

Now is the time for serious students to question the cultural authority of fashion as it exists both in the art world and the culture-at-large. If things seem dull at the Art Institute these days, it is because most students are far too comfortable with art as a form of fashion, which is just too easy to be interesting.



Pamela Kessler, "Untitled", acrylic on paper, 14"x 22"

### ***My People***

*Like to keep life simple  
And their thoughts their own*

### ***My People***

*Can't handle their drugs  
They go insane while still little*

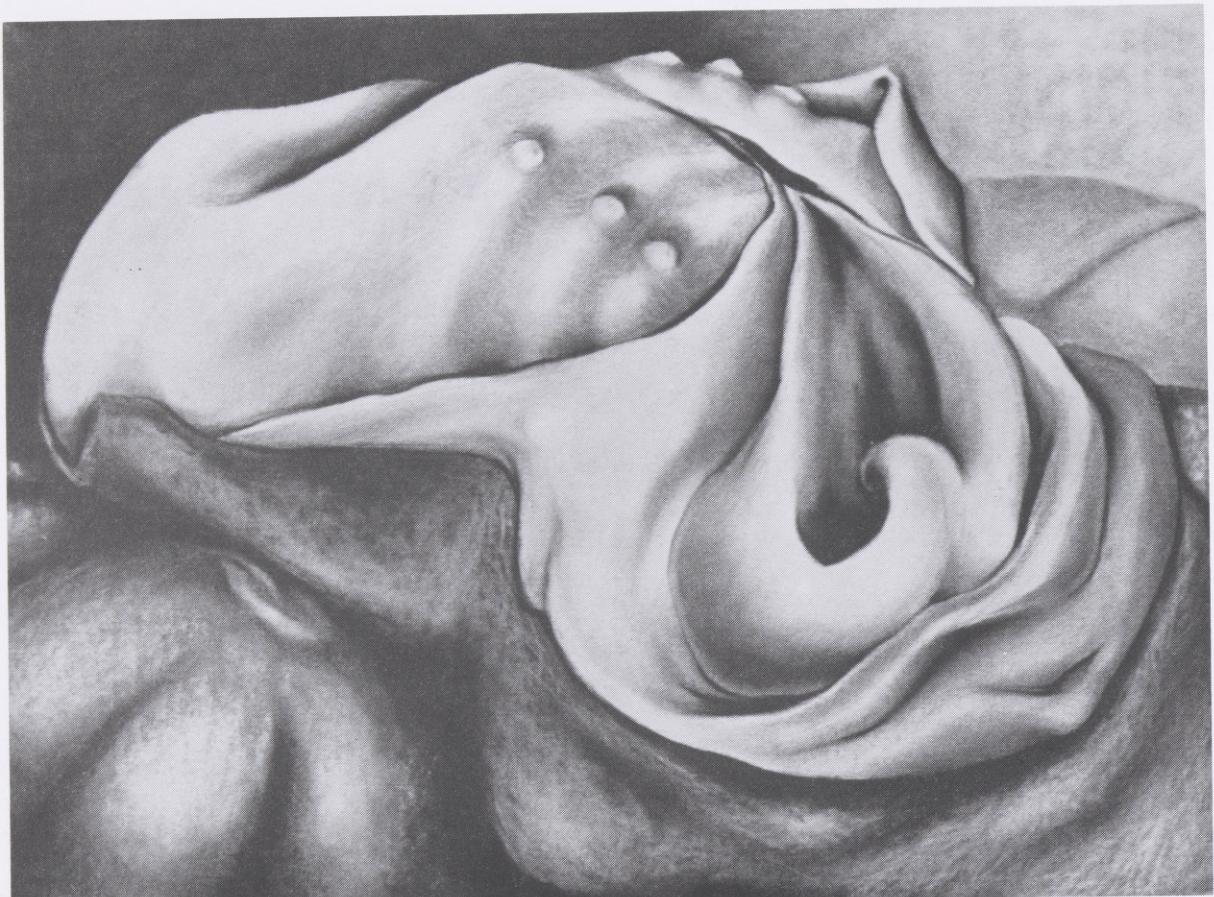
*They grow old & drunk  
Listen to country music  
And never say a word*

### ***My People***

*Who Built the city  
Who live in the country  
Who have grown dumb & lazy  
Who know they're not any good no more*

*So we sit on the Porch  
At the end of our time  
Our Souls as Pale as our skin.*

*- David Hagadorn*



*Bonnie Jordan, "Untitled", charcoal on paper, 14"x 18"*

## *Does Timelessness Count?*

*by Bill Berkson*

Who, having gained even the slipperiest foot-hold in our tirelessly "historicalized" present, would throw back into play those once-cherished posies of the kulturklatsch, divine genius and art's immortal energy? Can a culture running out of time afford to invest more than loose change and a piecemeal nostalgia in its museological keepsake? Isn't "the life of forms" a mere passing instance of ethno-structural relativism? And what of the Sublime, that gaseous (and probably authoritarian) stratagem devised to wrench the mind away from its real-time crises? Thus blow the chill factors of the exceedingly wised-up *Zeitgeist*. And so, when the editors of the "SFAI" Journal invited me to write something about timelessness in art, I sensed there had to be some sinister trick in the bargain.

"Timelessness," which strickly denotes a condition of being without beginning and end, serves as a misnomer for two kinds of esthetic duration. That these two can intersect is implied by Philip Guston's remark ( apropos to two very different artists, Rembrandt and Piero della Francesca) :

"Certain artists do something and new emotion is brought into the world; its real meaning lies outside history and the chains of causality."

The first kind of "timelessness" is staying power, a work's capacity to survive — or even more gloriously, to transcend - the historical moment in which it is made, not just physically and conceptually. Anyone familiar with art knows the intensity - or what Whitehead called "the throbs of pulsation" - with which particular works can compel other - than - archaeological attention over a century or more. Ever more complex returns of attention here are the key. (Implicated sporadically in all this attention-getting is esthetic pleasure, which, as Kenneth Clark once observed, has the duration of the pleasure in smelling an orange.)

The second kind of "timelessness" is the flash or drift or barest ripple of esthetic transport in the face of a single work — the epiphanic moment that yanks you out of your shoes , or conversely, so fixates you that a time shift occurs, and a sense of openended revelation occurs. Such revelation

often has as its instrument on both sides an intuited disposition of mind — or attitude. The meeting of attitudes is akin to two-way direct address across time. But before you can recognize that this meeting has occurred, the event has soared, and you with it.

"Timelessness" generally has a strange, false ring of permanence. Tied to the canon of "great works" and the oracular rhetorics that support it is a notion of permanence as a pedagogical device prized for its convenience especially within entrenched but otherwise unstable cultures (our own, for one). A poem is timeless as long as it stays in the schoolbooks, or a painting so long as it isn't de-accessioned from the sites (exhibition wall or postcard rack) of official memory. We can easily imagine the art museum in its decrepitude housing a surplus of time: a checklist of specimens divested of the varying degrees of importance that had once been assigned to them.

Whatever exists must first appear in some circumstantial relation. And, obviously, whatever is timelessness must first be timely. Timelessness is very thin. An idea of it in terms of unalterable values would now seem farcical, if notegregious. Every artist's 15 minutes of fame argues for a "post-terity" equivalent to an art mover's van stalled at the next traffic light. Value, we tend to think, has moved on.

But one has epiphanies. Somewhere between appearance and fatigue, any work negotiates its peculiar measures of provisionality and rightness, intermittence and impasse, transcendence and fact. What Guston called "a new emotion" may be an astonishing aperture giving onto the bedrock necessities of consciousness (or, as Guston also put it, "a necessary and generous law"). Circumstances provide the code, but the necessity lies elsewhere and outlasts them. You spend the rest of your life replaying and sorting out the ineffable as if to regain a practical equilibrium. To that extent, one's long love for particular works is inductive and intellectual, because one wants to know them. The constancy involved is less a matter of wooing history or eternity than of how

inexhaustible the thing may be in its various aspects and completions. Inexhaustibility — that one is never done with seeing whatever has come to spell some vivid edge of sense or amplitude — is as close to an actual timelessness as I would think to get.



Keiichi Idehara, "Twins", oil on canvas, 48" x 60"

## ***Obsession***

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*Nicholas Dileo*

*People are boxes, thin, stiff walls  
I want to open them, pry them honestly open  
Can I use your contents? or will I lay you to waste*

*A trail of bloody boxes  
Picked fresh by the staggering virgin.  
Lay your garland heavy in my lap  
My wet lap moist from the sweat of your glass baskets  
Crystal baskets full of days gone by  
This is what I see when I talk about you to me.*

# **What Kind of School Are We Anyway?**

by Michael Grady

Everyone knows by now, we're the only fine art college in the nation. But what exactly does that mean? More important, what will it mean in 10 or 20 years from now? If SFAI is to continue its position as one of the worlds most progressive art schools we had all better take a hard look. There's a new millennium just around the corner and things are already changing like never before in history.

It all really comes down to the difference between "product" and "progress." SFAI is, and has been, one of a very few art colleges in the U.S.A. which places major emphasis on the underlying personal, historical and cultural issues which defined the contemporary art and artists — process. The proof of this lies in our unique approach to the curriculum; de-emphasizing formal and technical concerns in favor of those issues which pertain to the personal and artistic evolutionary process. The "product" oriented curriculum is concerned with the image - we are concerned more with the imagery, and its origins in human consciousness.

Art is visual, at least as we define it here, but the manner in which a visual idea is communicated is subject to technological and formal concerns. We have to deal with both conceptual and visual notions, strengthening the artist's awareness that the form and concept are inseparable. In view of the overwhelming impact new technology is having on the world, our students must be made aware of the possibilities. Of course, we're not exactly "state-of-the-art" when it comes to technology. We are not a technical school and students don't come here to be technicians. Our commitment to technology must go far enough, though, to allow

students conversantcy in a variety of new of new media. It should also be balanced by our primary job of encouraging new ideas.

While technology becomes obsolete at a rapidly increasing rate, great ideas and authentic expression do not. SFAI has consistently graduated artists who have left their marks on the art world despite an institutional avoidance of "high-tech" for its own sake. As long as we regard ourselves to be in the "idea" business rather than the "thing" business our students will find their ways into the media which best allow them to make their ideas manifest. The best way we can hope for is to continue to provide our students with an education that, in effect, teaches them how to learn rather than merely how to perform technical feats of magic. There are places which have and will establish the "cutting edge" of technology. We're not one of them, nor should we be.

The challenges we face in the next decade will clearly involve technology to some extent. The most important issues will, however, almost certainly be cultural. The term "post history" has already been used to describe a near future world devoid of the multi-cultural competitions and conflicts which have generally been at the root of the major historical events. The "information revolution" is creating a world culture. Already, the "western" Art World has evolved into the "Planetary" Art World in the sense that the other major traditions; Asian, Islamic, Tribal, etc., have been absorbed into it. To describe art (as distinct from the artist) as Asian", for instance, now refers to work which has not changed or developed significantly for many generations. At best, the placement of a cultural prefix on a work of art carries with it a connotation of provincialism or naivete. Artists, on the other hand, may come from any of the myriad of cultural traditions. Their work, if deemed serious by the Planetary Art World, must exist in a world of modernist/post-modernist critical issues which are no longer eurocentric.

In preparing our students to become part of the Planetary Art World it is no longer sufficient that they only be familiar with the ideas and images associated with European Culture, nor that they themselves are predominantly European. If the art world is, in fact, a poly-cultural synthesis then artists must respond to a wider variety of influences than ever before. The artist of the future will certainly rely on new tools in a way in which



Alison Kaplan, "Untitled", Silver Gelatin Print, 8"x 10"

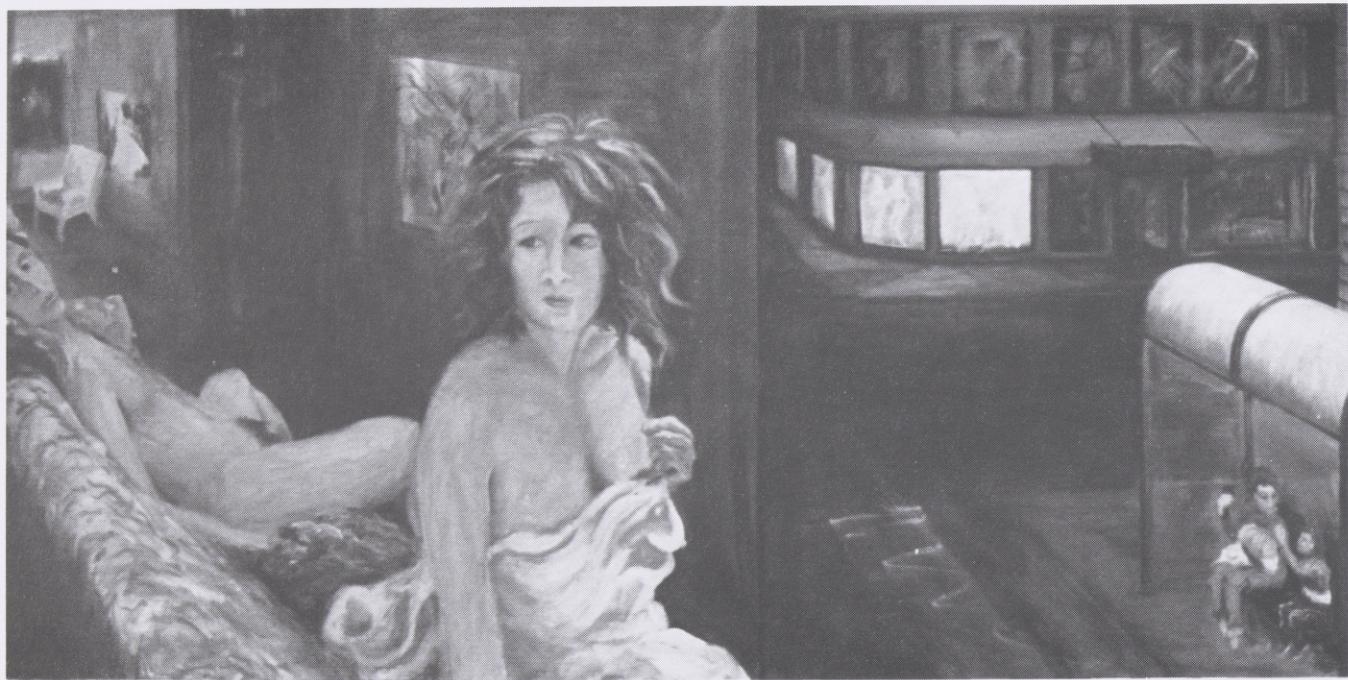
artists have never done before ( this is being written with a word-processor instead of a quill pen). Most important, though, they will to apply these tools to a world with entirely new cultural tenets.

Educationally we must continue to offer an environment of maximum stimulation and minimum restriction. In real terms our students' continued success in the world will depend on the level of intensity and relevance of the information they receive while they're at SFAI. The most important skills they will acquire here will be those which support their own internal search.

Artists will always distinguish themselves (achieve success), by adding something new to the conversation of ideas. This can occur only when the artist is aware of the culture in which we all live. There is no easy way to determine success in this area. We can only rely on history ( or post-history ) to make the real determination of an artist's success. So long as SFAI has lived up to its commitment and obligation to provide its students with a deep awareness of themselves as humans and as artists within a world culture, we need not be concerned about issues of success. Does a Zen monastery determine its success by counting the number of its monks who have achieved nirvana?

THE AIR WAS COOL AND MOIST,  
THE SMELL OF DRY LEAVES,  
AND BURNED WOOD FILLED THE AIR, BUT  
THAT WAS NOT THE ODOUR THAT THRILLED  
MY SOUL.  
NOT TOO FAR AWAY,  
OFF TOWARDS THE THIN ROW OF ELM TREES  
PEOPLE WERE HAVING A PICNIC  
AND THERE WERE RIBS  
ON THE BARBEQUE.  
I KNEW THERE WOULD BE  
LEFTOVERS FOR ME.  
MY MOUTH WAS WATERING AS  
I INCREASED MY TROT TO A SLOW,  
EVEN RUN.  
THE BREEZE LIFTED MY FUR ALL AROUND,  
FLATTENED MY EARS AND WISKERS,  
INVIGORATING ME.  
SUDDENLY I WAS THERE.  
PAPER PLATES WITH GNAWED BONES AND BITS  
OF POTATO SALAD AND BAKED BEANS SMILED  
AT ME FROM A PILE ON THE GRASS.

-Pamela Kessler



David N. Dale, "Indecisive", oil on canvas, 42" x 86"

## To Rack Focus: From A Coney Island Dog To A Banana Split

by Johnny Rock

I am certain I have been implanted with the memory that I come here by a sensuous elevator. Five twisting trees of scrap iron wire into the horizon. I explore the spinal mysteries of a seductive spiral stair, and, with my fingers shielding my eyes, I witness a huge column constructed of my own photography. The column is adorned with an inscription: emotions can easily be mapped on graphs - a line rises from near the bottom, then drops, finding its new level below its original point of origin. Against the east wall of a gutted tenement, replacing a dejected mall, in the cleft of a dying factory called Milwaukee, Desiree freezes as she holds her dress against the wind. The sun's vicious light, blown through an American flag, forms her into the wall. No one notices that this strange development in the city's skeleton is a woman, or, more accurately, an illusion of a woman seen from a distance. Obsessed with enigmas in general, a photographer shoots the wall obsessively. Somewhere on the wall he believes he senses a hidden passage, which he believes he can divulge - and enter through his art.

The photographer: The quest is an image as opposed to a woman, yet through the repetition I may be able to reach the other side.

He believes he is a victim who is a hero circled

by a shark in the sea.

Desiree was eighteen years old and was addressing the audience from the wall beyond coherence: "It's a mystery to me, but I've arranged things to look interesting, thus I have allowed myself to dive into a slight quest of hand."

She realizes that beneath any deck, the cards are rearranging themselves a million miles a minute. She bends the message of her faith. "I believe that taking photos of my photos of your photos of everyone else's photos and then photos of those photos is the only way to reach a source which does not exist. She doesn't even consider painting. Desiree: "I've tried not to write, although introspection is my only (sexual?) release."

The photographer wonders: "Is there a jungle behind the jungle that is laid secretly by the night?" He enters one of his own photos and consumes heaps of pills. He lifts his ex-lover: "I want to sail, hon. Once you sail out far enough you're part of it. You're nobody else" He drops her and turns toward a mirror: "I've been taking pictures of the ocean." He turns again, this time to an unshaded window. His ex cries: "I wish you would look into my eyes like you look through that window." The photographer: "The strange thing though, is that by taking pictures of the

pictures of the pictures I've found an entrance in time." His eyes lead the sharpness of his nose against Desiree's cheek. He tries to tempt her into walking into a photograph of an enormous eye.

The photographer: "It's difficult to say the words that I am in the mood for at the time of my fate." He finds himself in a passage where Desiree hides her body, piece by piece; limb by limb, she conceals herself in the sensuous webbwork of shadows and alcoves. His secretary hands him a memo stating he is scheduled to reconstruct Desiree, with due objectivity, before the immoral scrutinization of the oppressed and the press. Is it Desiree's body he's reconstructing or his own?

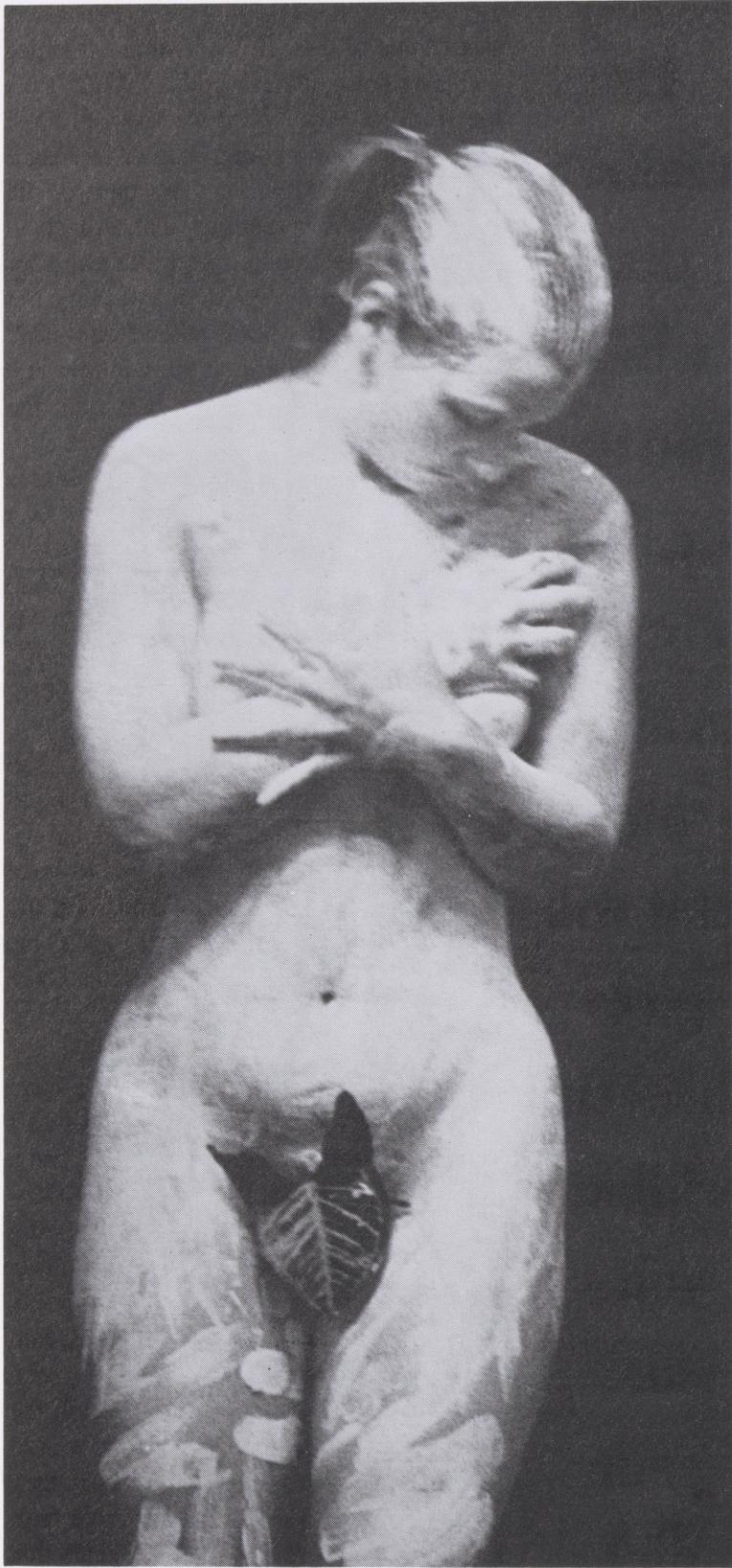
Desiree: "I have never turned my face in order to transfigure his own hard features." He hand lays before her like a mask.

The photographer hears this and stumbles blindly into a strip search. He looks upon a border between territories, embedded with sullen guards who are like jewels with enormous blue eyes. They appear to be teenagers but the profusions of hair on their appendages defies their age. They massage up and down his body opening up channels which send messages and images to his head. He thinks: "I am developing a cheap mystical experience in a tray of liquid." Everything changes. The border transforms into the edge of a dense jungle of dripping foillage carved from old movie scripts: "Just blow. No Strings attached." "Attica" The texts drool, bleeding a white substance where the sentences have been severed from the edge of the page. Another border appears behind him. He sees in a rearview mirror a pack of boys clothed as tourists hurl their nimble bodies from a cliff. The first boy lands like a angel and re-begins the search. He holds the photographer down and inserts his hands into his anus. His camera falls and breaks into pieces. Within seconds the whole herd infiltrate his bowels and convene like the muttering hoard of a jury. All he can feel is a tearing or peeling which he can't quite pin down near his colon. The jungle slaps him in the face. The boy leaps from his hole. "We found it" They unfold a huge photograph that begins the

He  
realizes  
that  
when  
you die  
there is  
always  
some-  
thing  
that will  
go to  
heaven  
without  
you -  
like  
your  
dick  
and  
your  
lips

size of one of their fists and ends up larger than the photographer's body. "Well," says the smallest boy, "what we seem to have here is a shot of a young man devouring a banana split." He realizes that when you die there is always something that will go to heaven without you like your dick and your lips. He shoves the spoon in and stares out into the street. the shot is taken from inside and rack-focuses through the window into the distance." They cover him with the photograph and pin him as if under a tarp. "And what we have when the photo fixes is a huge policeman covered with amour by a red wall eating a coney dog, a big long one." The photographer tries to free himself. They hold him down tighter. *DREAMCHILD* "If I could just transform my body into paper," he thinks, "Then I could be free." Everything changes again.

The photographer, now bodiless, tries to find a form to enter: I tried to find somebody to enter and found a drunk on a park bench. He was a little too small so I had to hone myself down to the size of a shriveled old man. Once in his body I had to get to his mind. The alcohol began to affect me. Once in his mind I was safe. I began receiving signals from a certain border area that was heavily guarded. Beyond that was a huge valley and in the center of the valley was a giant pit, a type of recreational hole like a public pool. Once in his mind I could follow him to this border where he was being detained by the guards. By approaching his consciousness from behind I could sneak past the border, invisible to the guards, find my way to the public pit that I had only seen from a distance, and have some fun in the same way I had seen the others: they would leap and, depending on how much they enjoyed the freedom of unbelievable fear, shrink their bodies into the tiny sizes that would intensify the fall, until they hit the bottom, a white fluorescent tissue like a human organ. I passed the border and was descending down an on ramp of cement when I saw a woman holding a large white branch that had fallen from a tree coming up a road that ran along a calm river. I tried to change my course but saw that she had *continued page 39.....Rock*



Suzanne Seucs, "Untitled", Silver Gelatin Print, 8"x10"

### You & Me

stretched  
alone  
pressed down...tormented  
hands  
like spiders  
seeking  
life amongst  
the roots

stillness  
intruding  
on some madness  
came  
a gentle knowing nudge  
dying  
the soul murmured  
quickenings of the warmth

held  
clutched fiercely  
cradled  
tight to throbbing breasts  
cocooned  
a lullaby/a rocking  
supported  
on great massive thighs

rebirth  
the womb  
such music  
thickens pulsates  
joy  
sadness  
sobbing on the breezes  
weeping...wild  
deep dark despair

heaving  
sweating swaying  
two bodies roll in dance  
a visceral entwinement  
coupled  
pain and healing  
sharing  
compassion rapture life

grasping  
truth  
true essence  
of belonging  
i hold

i recognize  
my  
ancient Mother

-Patricia

# **D i s t a n c e**

by Nicholas Dileo

I looked around distracted as the noise increased and the floor started moving. I ran like a drunken sailor until I reached the stairs and jumped down them two at a time, bouncing and grabbing for anything. It was a cheap funhouse, but you couldn't see the cables through the cracks.

All the pondering souls ran outside. Children to recess, with the look of innocence that didn't hide the smirk that was in awe of all the destruction. I walked over to Trasa and asked her if our dinner plans were still on.

"Yeah, sure but let's swing by my house, I want to check my stuff—let's try to beat traffic on your motorcycle—Do you think my car will get broken into?" She gave me a clean smile and went inside to get her alarm keys. I looked back to the bay and could see a fifty ton shipping crane still swaying slow over the water's edge. I waited for her; then we left.

Trasa had a big mouth, she didn't gossip, physically she had a big mouth. She looked like a bass, as though she had the capacity to distend her jaw and suck up everything in her domain. I was prone to daydream over the intake volume of that one orifice. After one look at Trasa, I would find myself inside her with four or five people playing cards on a hexagonal table covered with felt, drinking sangria, and screaming poetry just to hear the echoes. Trasa and I slid into the streets and came upon herds, illuminating a fading city. First awareness; No light, No electricity, No stores, No alcohol, No food.

We jumped a curb, and sliced down the sidewalk to a corner store, and I ran in. "Are you open? Can I buy something?"

The storeowner was an old Lebanese tailor who had hawked everything, goats, needles, irons, and

daughter, to come to the land of milk and honey. Now he was standing up to his ankles in broken booze bottles, wondering if it was all worth it.

"Look, looo-k, I loo-sed efery-ting, efery-ting is broken" He had the face of a martyr with his hands in the air, empty shelves, an icon framed by a generic cigarette display, with ablutions of tequila and gin.

"Yes, this is terrible-- Can I buy a bottle from you?" I can still make out in the fading twilite, two fifths of brandy laying on their sides.

"Yes, but we are still alive, thank Allah."

"Yes we still have our health, — no , the bigger bottle, yes that one will do it." I gave him a ten and told him to keep the change. I went outside and saw the full moon rising. The cars were piling up like Hacedic children, and swarms were raping the liquor stores waiting for something to come down from the mountain.

"I'll have a golden cow straight up... No make that a Shiva that I am death on the rocks, splash of water."

Trasa and I looked for food but all the stores had shut, and were standing guard against the looters. We breezed through the traffic with the dull drone of the extra weight harping, like the nostalgia of a divorced aunt.

The night was streaming by, and I had to scream for Trasa to hear me. "We're bounded now in hypertime Trasa - the tectonic plates have shifted for all eternity to bring us together tonight. Food is superfluous now, just eat up the apparenacy of it all, and satiate yourself with the wild hogshead of a moon." Trasa didn't hear a word I said, she sat miles away on the back of the bike thinking about the many things in her house. She wondered which ones were broken and which ones she could claim twice on both of her comprehensive insurance policies.

She was the daughter of a Hartford Insurance mogul, and was force fed "protection..preparation" from day one. Honest fellows those insurance people, they tell you right up front. "You pay me X dollars a month and when you die I'll give it back" They cover themselves though, you have to sign a disclaimer against any knowledge of being the eleventh avatar, or any previous contact with Walt Disney.

We were cutting through my neighborhood and passed my apartment, a two-story pre-fab from the thirties built up for the Jewish working class. All the rooms were strangely connected by

thin doors with moulding that was cross stylized with the wall relief. The front stoop was a "crack den" open twenty four hours a day, exceptions accepted. We had a steel gate over the door so that you had to ring the doorbell with a stick. It got great light between 4 and 6 pm in the bathroom.

When we got to the end of the street, there among the slag of a hot summer was a burning Winnebago. It wasn't a palatial techno-cruiser that looks like its packing ICBMs. This was smaller, something mom and dad might take down to Florida to watch the space shuttle launch.

The flames were dancing off the roof, blackening the grey concrete of the overpass above. It was a futuristic pagan ritual. I was wondering if some poor bastard was inside and Trasa was wondering if they had any insurance.

We were the first on the scene but didn't get off the bike. We were lulled out of time by the brightness. I turned around and this crazy hooker broke my spell.

"I fuck ya for a dolla, I fuck ya for a dolla."

She was tugging at my coat kind of half curtsying and pirouetting, a courting dance by another name. All I thought was, a buck; ten dimes. Is this the trickle down Reagan was talking about? That figure screeched in my head, and it made its way back to the stage. "A Buck."

Her eyes sprung forward like an old jack in the box, then died the slow death of a cobalt vase at sunset. I thought about it another second and decided no. Her body was covered in car fumes and street grime, her brown skin showed through like un-healed scars. Her matted hair showed the courage of old shingles hanging by old tar.

"You don' hafta worry bout no kid baby! I'm pregnan' already, come on just a buck baby!"

Which baby was she talking to? Sorry sister, I'd like to help but I'm a eunoch." I looked over my shoulder," how bout you?" They both dropped their shoulders and gave me a scornful look. I took out a crumpled dollar and placed it in her thin hand. Trasa and I waited a minute longer, then pulled away to leave a "God bless you," gobbled up by the on coming sirens. We headed up high into the hills, towards her house.

From Trasa's window you could see all the organism that was the city. It tasted sour to suck it all in at once. We opened the brandy, sat on a futon couch and watched the dim pulse of a city burning. The blacked out skyscrapers stood stupid, like naked witch stakes unsure and nervous to

see flames feeding on their feet.

As we drank more her face reddened, every swig seemed to cut the ribbons of self-consciousness tension that bound her for every moment she was outside of her house. She was a fiddler crab looking for just the right shell, like everyone, running bare-backed across hot sand, trembling looking for the new world in a shell.

She got up and put on Bartok, then sat down next to me. "Toland, why do you live in that neighborhood, don't you get sick of all that noise and violence, ya know like just as far as your environment affecting your everyday and everything?"

I didn't want to answer, "I hear the cats barking out prices, I hear the kid next door get beat for laughing too loud. Ya know there are these two brothers who live across the street in one room. One sleeps while the other reads, they have one bed, so I come home every night and see the sad serenade of the night reader. He sits up there on the third floor, swaying back and forth in front of the open window. He puts his book on top of the T.V. and rocks back and forth, the malignant blue light sucking what's left of his soul right out of him. Like some lopsided metronome he just pumped new info in and that idiot box just sucked it right out. You can't even tell them apart anymore. — Nah, it's not so strange, it makes as much sense as the people who follow their dogs and pick up their shit, no I don't think it's sad, it just is."

Trasa sat reflecting and didn't say any thing. The moon came down and brought the word destiny to our mind, then everything became cloudy to her, then the word left her for the night under auspices of un-prepared.

Ya know destiny does exist. He is a tall homosexual man, all in white, walking, calling you, and you follow him down a long corridor of appliance store windows. You walk, asking the prices, turning the knobs, and wonder what it would be like to shit in a crapper made of gold.

"Well at least your rent is low, ... I wish that's all I had to pay."

"I wish that's all you had to pay too."

Trasa and I curled up like two cats pretending to save each other from the outside world.



Randy Kaneshiro, "Untitled", Silver Gelatin Print, 5.5" x 7"

**DEAR JOHN:**

You scared me amongst waves of autumn leaves  
that day after school.

You scared me with that belt.

(Remember the secret pocket you hid your  
five dollars in?)

You scared me amongst old candles that night in  
an empty house.

You scared me with that fist.

(Remember how your knuckles felt in the  
cold wind?)

You scared me amongst grains of salty sand that  
day at the beach.

You scared me with that belt.

(Remember how I confiscated it from your  
room?)

You scared me.

You are etched in my memory.

You scared me.

You loved me.

-Donna Han

**Greece**

Woke up on a floor of cool plaster stepped out of  
a still damp fresco got gold filigree film drape  
barely conceal'in my lapis lazuli light reflect'in  
constellations of desire on white stucco morning  
I'm juggl'in crimson pomegranate gonna feed  
seeds to my pet snake he's got 7 rubbies up his  
spine whispers obscenities in my ear, makes me  
laugh when everyone's look'in I'm going to  
Delphi make me a wish at the well take that coin  
and clinch it 'tween my teeth raise my arms to the  
sky blow kisses to the wind take a swan dive to the  
bottom come back up on awhirl gonna go straight  
to heaven ....hey Pleides Sisters here I come

- Anonymous

# Little Cowboy

by Cowboy Rod

I was a kid once, but that seems like centuries ago.

I remember so little of my childhood, where have the memories gone? I have a piece of paper that says I was born 44 years ago, in Vallejo. That's in California. Is that proof of existence, or what?

I remember seeing a photo once, of a little room, that supposedly was my first house. I don't recall anything about that house other than I felt strangely empty, and totally alien when I saw that photo. That room was a little box with four walls and no windows. It had a ceiling but it didn't have any lights. There were about four or five steps going up, in the corner of the back wall. They went up to an open doorway going nowhere. I don't know where that doorway went, it was always dark up there. There wasn't any furniture, only my little bed with walls.

There was a front porch with lots of steps going way down, I never went out there, too scary. Mommy and another lady were sitting on the edge of the porch wall, and Daddy was never there. I didn't even know I had a Daddy.

My first memories are vague at best, and scattered. Hermosa Street was really my first home, and the first impressions I recall. There was a backyard full of weeds three times as tall as me, and a front yard with a fat Mexican palm right in the middle. We were the second house in from the Dead-In Fence. The Fence kept us out of the hilly farm that went on for years.

One day a Giant Cow magically appeared on the street. I'd never seen a cow before, let alone a Giant Cow; I was scared to death and called, "Mommy, Mommy"! She came out and made Giant Cow go away to where Giant Cow belong. Mommy was dwarfed by that big monster; she made it go away; she was my hero. I never, ever saw a Giant Cow again, and to this day, I swear, there was once a Giant Cow.

I had a Metal Horsey, I guess I got it one Christmas. It seems to me I didn't have it very long, nor did I ride it very much. That Metal Horsey meant a lot to me. I wonder what happened to him. He had peddles, and when I'd push down on them, he would bounce up and gallop. I rode my Horsey to Oklahoma in the front room, to South America in the front yard and to The Moon in the back yard. Every

once in a while I see an old rusty Metal Horsey, and remember the one I had.

Whenever I recall my Horsey, I also remember peeing in the street, I was two or three or four, and there was a cute little girl that lived across the street. I wanted to impress her so I went out into the middle of the street, unzipped and peed. Mommy got to me before I finished and took me into the house, maybe my Horsey was left outside that night and stolen. I wonder whatever happened to my Horsey.

Once there was a small room, with scratchy, fat walls like Mommy's hot bread. It was cold and scarey and I was in jail. I remember another dark room with high windows I couldnt see out of. I was in jail in that room too. Mommy came to get me, but it always felt like forever, and it was always dark and ugly. Mommy shouldn't have left me at those ladies' houses'. I can't remember Mommy taking me to those ladies' houses', or taking me home. I can't remember anything about those ladies' or the rest of their houses'. All I can remember is those cold and scary, dark, ugly jailrooms. I couldn't wait for Mommy to come and get me.

Mommy was making mud pies and I wanted to make mud things too, but my mud things didn't look like Mommy's. Mommy got big orange leaves and put them on the mud pies, and cut them out. She took the mud leaves somewhere and when she brought them home, they were so pretty, all shiney and green. I would touch the pretty green leaves but I broke them, and Mommy would make more. She made pretty roses too, but she wouldn't let me touch them. I fooled her though, I touched them when she wasn't looking. They broke. Then Mommy got a real pretty mud lady. She hid the lady way high so I couldn't touch it. She put lace all over the ladies dress and painted her face. I wanted to have a pretty lady to paint too. I was so happy when Mommy got me a bear to paint, for my very own. My bear was so pretty and I was so happy, but Mommy took it away with the pretty lady. I was so sad, why couldn't I have my bear, he was my very own? Then one day, Mommy brought home a box and opened it. Guess what? I saw the pretty lady and there was my bear. They were all shinier and prettier than I remember. I still have my bear. One day I climbed up to see Mommy's pretty lady. I touched her pretty dress, it broke.

I was sitting on my Mommy's lap in front of this big machine that made stuff and clothes. I was making stuff too, but pretend. I pretended a lot. I think I even made some real clothes for my dolly, but they didn't fit too good. Mommy made a lot of clothes for

our new baby. That was alright, but Mommy would not let me touch my new baby. I guess she would break too, so Mommy got me my own baby that wouldn't break. My clothes didn't fit my baby very well. It wasn't the same as Mommy's baby. I want my Horsey.

Mommy's always with her new baby. She's not making mud ladies or clothes things anymore, and I can't find my Metal Horsey.

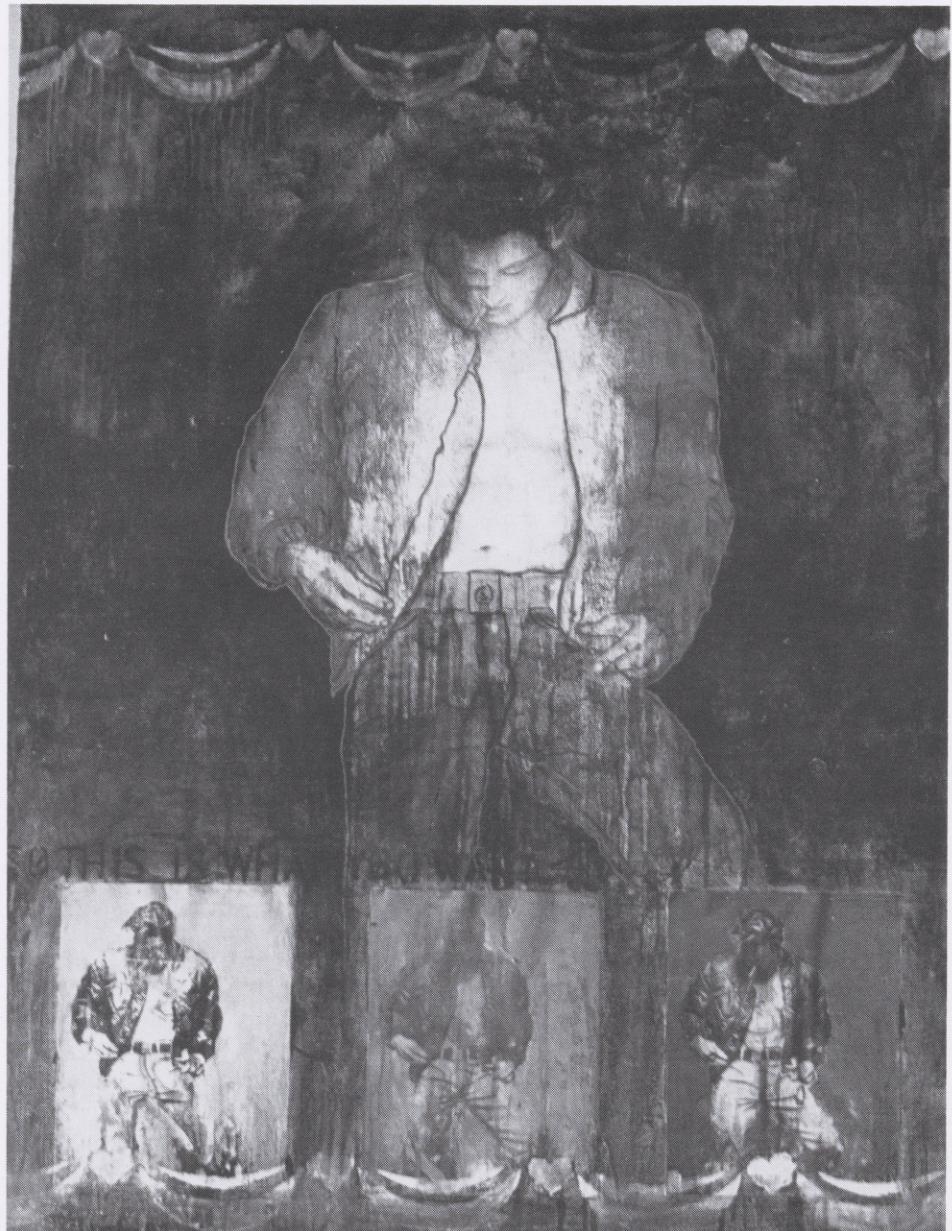
I'm going to the garage. This man is in the garage doing neat stuff on machines that have lights and knobs. Boy, is that neat, I wanna play too. "What are ya doing ' I ask? He tells me to go back in to the house. I DID HAVE A DADDY! He sure is doing some neat stuff. He'll play with me tomorrow.

I wish I knew where my Metal Horsey was, I'd sure ride him right now.

Mommy is still making clothes for my little sister, and I'm still making clothes for my dolls, they fit better now. I'm also making puppets and having puppet shows in the garage. Oh! By the way, we've moved to Strawberry Drive, in Mill Valley. My puppet shows are fun, my friends come to see them and they even give me five cents. I make a lot of puppets, but I still like my dolls better.

One day I was making mud pies, it was fun, and the ice cream man came down the street ringing his bells. I ran inside and got some money from Mom and got a fudgesicle, boy was it good. I saved the wrapper and licked the stick real clean, cause I had a good idea. I got some mud and made my own fudgesicle on the stick and put the wrapper on real careful. Here comes Tommy, I'll sell him my fudgesicle for five cents and watch him eat it. Tommy ran home to get some money and ran back. He took the fudgesicle home. I didn't see him eat it. We never played together after that, and then. Tommy moved away.

I saw a kid down the street riding my Metal



Gene Durand, "So This Is What You Want", mixed media, 36"x 48"

Horsey but it was all dirty, I still can't find mine.

One day I was playing in the front yard and WOW! Look what's coming down the road. "Mommy, Mommy, come here, Mommy". It's a big horsey, it's a real horsey, it's not a Metal Horsey. "Boy, Oh boy! Mommy can I ride him, can I ride him? Please, oh please can I ride him?" Mommy said OK. "Oh boy!" The man put a cowboy hat and chaps on me and put me in the saddle. This Horsey was better than my Metal Horsey. I rode him around the drive-way, then the man took my picture and took the horsey away. Boy, was that neat! Oh, Mommy put my sister on him too. Now the big horsey is gone and so is my Metal Horsey. I wish I knew where he was. If I only knew where he was.

I was a kid once, but that was centuries ago.



*Kay Marie Jacobson, from the series, "Lost Paradise", mixed media, 24"x 36"*

## **JULES VERNE: A PERFORMANCE FOR TWO VOICES IN 5 SCENES**

*A work in progress by : Anita Margrill*

### **BACKGROUND**

Jules Verne's prodigious output of more than eighty novels spanned from 1863 ("Five Weeks in a Balloon") to 1905 ("The Conquest of the Sea"). Darwin's "Origin of Species" had just been published (1859), and many people in Europe began to find, in science, the rational basis for a new philosophy. Technological improvement was seen to be (for better or worse) allied with industrial growth and material progress. The pace of change was so rapid, that it was difficult for the general public to grasp the wider applications and implications of scientific methodology. Verne's work served to popularize science.

Very much a man of his times, Verne extrapolated people's hunger for an extension of the limits of the possible - epitomized by the (then) current desire to explore all the blank spaces on the map of the world - by concocting glorious journeys into space and beneath the earth and sea. Verne's work served to focus the public's image on the scientific explorer who exploits technology for his own adventurous purposes.

Beyond this rather superficial message, delivered in a serial manner akin to our soap operas, Verne's developing oeuvre began to take a moral tone. It evolved into an understanding that scientific knowledge was a two-edged sword: In the wrong hands, technology was an awesome weapon. So that, in an early book, "From the Earth to the Moon", characters who blithely ascend in a rocket on a voyage somewhat similar in tone to a picnic alongside the Seine, appear twenty years later, in "Purrchase on the Norht Pole," and self-destruct.

In book after book, Verne talked about the alienation of the hero, or the mad scientist who ran amok, or the Prussian general who tried to bomb an ideal city. The public did not respond to this part of his message. Verne's adventure stories stimulated generations of youth's choices in careers - and influenced men as diverse as Admiral Byrd and Werner Von Braun and their scientific pursuits.

Verne did not write in an creative vacuum. France was in political and artistic ferment. Louis Napoleon had lost the Franco-Prussian War and Paris was besieged. Balzac, Hugo, Zola bemoaned man's alienation from materialistic society. Rimbaud, on his own quest, reinvented language. But surprisingly little is known about Verne's personal life, beyond the chronological facts. His relatives burned his personal papers after his death. Why?

I became curious about the secret events in Verne's life: events which precipitated his changing view of science and the world, turning him from optimist to pessimist. After some study, and an abortive attempt to write a biography/novel about all this - the enclosed work suddenly developed in the form of a play. Here is the first draft of either a one-act

performance, or the first act of a longer play. May I add that I have taken liberties - for instance, Verne and Nelly Bly do meet, but in Amiens, where Verne actually lived later in life. Nelly Bly, on her record-breaking trip around the world sponsored by Hearst's newspaper as a publicity stunt, visited Verne in the late 1890's, in an act of homage.

## NOTES ON THE SETTING OF THE PLAY

I use the Crystal Palace as a metaphor for Verne's edifice of books. Like Verne's stories, the Grand Expositions of the 19th century served to popularize science and technology. Housed in glass pavilions, which were, themselves, marvels of building innovation, were displays from the industrial world, exhibited prototypes of technological achievement.

I envision the performance taking place in this Crystal Palace. The canon, a major dramatic prop set in front of the Palace, was actually shown at the Paris Exposition of 1865, as the highlight of the Prussian display. It was a Krupp breech loading artillery gun, which incorporated an advanced barrel design (milled from a single block of steel.) Ironically, this was the gun used to defeat France a few years later, in the Franco-Prussian War.

When the play opens, Voice 1 and 2 are perched on the canon which has been fashioned to work like a see-saw. Not only has Verne written about the armaments of war, but he has also written about rockets to the moon and submarines. Therefore, the moving see-saw can be thought of, alternately, as these projectiles. While the players talk, stand up, and move around, the balance of the see-saw shifts, so that sometimes one player is in the air, then the other, or neither. This is meant to represent shifts in emphasis, play on words, changes in the balance of power, inner and outer person, and the general precarious nature of life. The changes in balance may occur at any time, as in a game.

The actual Crystal Palace, originally built as a temporary structure, is shown here in the process of transmogrification or change. It was a thing of beauty created by technology, and it is being destroyed by the heat of a war abetted, also, by technological advancement. The structure is shown supported by wood scaffolding, to emphasize its temporal nature. Affixed to this scaffolding, are elements which look like falling glass shards. This represents the infrastructure which is going through a phase change, from cast glass to molten state. Leaning against the structure, and free-standing, are elements which represent layers of ice floes and glaciers. Some of the performance takes place in the arctic, and the ice also implies a phase change of water, analogous to the alteration in the state of the melting glass.

## SCENE I

Scene I: Street in Paris during the Siege of Paris, 1870

Voice 1: A friend

Voice 2: Jules Verne

Voice 1: On every corner they are selling things to eat.

Voice 2: Last night I had donkey steak for dinner.

Voice 1: There are no cats and dogs left in Paris.

Voice 2: You can buy anything on the street: Women, slices of coconut, pieces of stove pipe, weapons that look like they come from a theater prop room...

Voice 1: ....or from Pandora's box.

Voice 2: All Paris is burning. There are soldiers everywhere. They have cut down the trees in the Bois de Bologne.

Voice 2: Have you seen Nelly? ( shouts ) Nelly, Nelly

Voice 2: Each day I wait for a shell to drop on my house. Sometimes at night, the floor sways under my bed, like the long roll in the aftermath of an earthquake, but it's really the aftershock of an explosion. I lay there, face down, breathing into my pillow, clutching the sides of the bed, hoping I will float downstream out of danger.

Voice 1: ( still looking for Nelly ) She must be looking for soldiers to interview. We could have escaped south, but she says that living longer, but dying of boredom, is not the answer. She wants to be a hero.

Voice 2: Being a hero is to eat donkey with rancid butter on your turnip greens.

Voice 1: Last night I went to Nadar's place. Since the Prussians cut the cables under the Seine, the only news we get from the rest of the country is by carrier pigeon. Felix wants to send up a balloon to fly over the Seine. Gambetta thinks that if he can get to Amiens, he can rally an army.

Voice 2: The balloon would be a perfect target.

Voice 1: He's counting on a surprise.

Voice 2: The Prussians would laugh so hard they couldn't shoot straight.

Voice 1: If he could get the balloon high enough it would be safe...perhaps at night. Anyway, Gambetta is willing to take the chance and ride in the thing.

Voice 2: I went up with Nadar a few years ago. He brought along his wife and a good dinner to eat along the way. We were lucky to lose only the dinner with the ballast.

Voice 1: What happened?

Voice 2: He was experimenting with a drag line trying to control speed and direction. We were just getting off, the wind suddenly changed and the line became entangled in some trees. He cut it loose, but the gondola had begun to scrape along the ground, so we threw everything overboard.

Voice 1: That didn't stop you from writing about it.

Voice 2: (laughs) First hand experience is better than all the research in the Biblioteque. But, I'm afraid that Gambetta's flight will end like ours almost did - a scene from an operetta.

Voice I: Better that we all end up playing in Offenbach than in Wagner.

## SCENE II

Scene II: The Verne home, anytime

Voice I: Honoreine, Verne's wife

Voice 2: Jules Verne

(Lights dim. Voice 2 moves forward to talk to the audience, while Voice I changes her seat to where Voice 2 had been sitting)

**Voice 2:** We move to a long hallway, actually a gallery on the second floor in Jules Verne's home. Verne's wife, Honoreine, has decorated the hall with a family of white marble busts representing the Ceasars, and on the walls are large candelabra, intermixed with hanging tapestries. All this, of course, to give the impression of a rich, settled family residence of many generations. ( moves to sit down ) A dark figure, thrown into relief by the morning light filtering through the east facing windows, Verne moves down the hall, stops at a door and shouts.... ( makes a motion, as if to knock on the door ) ..... "ELEVEN DAYS OF SIEGE." Monsieur pounds on Madam's door. The situation? Farce. The scene is set, and the denouement, resolution and curtain follow. All because Eve has eaten the apple, and, feeling guilty, has retreated to her room and locked the door. Adam pleads his case. ( pause ) "Just as I am pleading with you, Honoreine...don't lock me out."

(spotlight on Voice I)

Voice I: I thought we would lead a 'good life', but you say I have no imagination. I can't follow you to the depths of the oceans or travel with you to the stars, Jules. You want your meals served precisely on time. You demand your privacy. Your friends barely say hello when they dirty my rugs on their way to your study. What have you told them about me?

**Voice 2:** (sits down) I used to go crazy over women. I thought marriage was the answer.

Voice 1: That I'm jealous. That I like to pick berries to make jam, and sit on the beach with the children. That I'm a martyr, that my knees are raw from hours spent in prayer to God to make me ( pause ) interesting.

**Voice 2:** Honoreine came with two young daughters, a ready-made family, and, at once I was a father and ( more loudly ) a stockbroker, My life was laid out - I knew what I would be doing in five, ten years, just like my father, the rest of my life. And I didn't want to know. ( gets up )

Voice I: Jules, where are you going?

**Voice 2:** To Nadar's. We are taking a balloon out for trials. Felix is planning to inflate the bag with coal gas, for a change. He thinks we can get up to 3000 feet.

Voice I: Always Nadar. He doesn't go to his office and his partners think he is home writing. He complains that the children are crying and he can't work. But he does write. There are manuscripts all over the house. We sleep in separate rooms now. I live with a crazy man who throws things. Jules was so angry at Michel last night for not going to sleep when told to put out his light, that he threw the boy's paints out the window. The poor child had to pick up the colors in the wet grass this morning. ( pause ) Now Jules knocks on my door to say that he is sorry. Hah

(spotlight on Voice I shuts off, as Voice 2 moves forward)

**Voice 2:** When you are up in a balloon, the ground is a huge reflector, and earth sounds travel upward. Conversely, you can also piss down, through the bottom of the balloon's porthole, onto the spires of Notre Dame...trace the pattern of the Seine, fly over places where certain events have been known to occur at specific times in ones life ( makes a sweeping gesture with hand )....see a panorama which one tries to decipher, all laid out on the gently curving plain of Paris, below.

## SCENE III

Scene III: The Paris Exposition, 1865

Voice 1: Nelly Bly, young reporter for the N.Y. Herald

**Voice 2:** Jules Verne

(spotlight on Voice I as Voice 2 continues. Voice 2 acknowledges the other person)

**Voice 2:** All my life I have wanted to explore.

(Voice 1 bows to Voice 2)

**Voice 2:** And you, my dear Miss Nelly Bly, are the explorer. Courage, thy name is Nelly Bly. You are the personification of my Phileas Fogg, and you have beaten his record around the world. How long did your trip take?

Voice I: Seventy-two days, plus a few hours, give or take. It was, of course, a newspaper stunt.

**Voice 2:** None-the-less, as one writer to another, congratulations! I must admit that, until now, my adventures have been confined to those of my characters. ( Dazzling smile at Nelly ) I keep my eye on you newspaper people. Stanley's dispatches from Africa are more exciting than anything I could write. But, Miss Bly, those months I spent with Captain Nemo on the Nautilus, sailing beneath the sea, were real times for me. Then, when I surfaced to continue the rest of my life, how dull and brown things looked, compared to the infinitely colorful world of the oceans.

Voice I: Nemo was an anarchist, wasn't he, Mr. Verne? He would have been at home here in Paris, today.

**Voice 2:** Nemo was a lone wolf, roaming the ocean depths: an outlaw, who, right or wrong, inflicted his own brand of justice on the world.

Voice I: So, you are talking morality, then? The notion of a vengeful man, wronged by society. I don't think you can completely disavow the role of a revolutionary, Mr Verne.



*Kay Marie Jacobson, from the series, "Lost Paradise", mixed media, 24" x 36"*

**Voice 2:** Nemo struggles to escape one formula and falls into the rigidity of another. He ends by being caught in a maelstrom, and even I don't know if he escapes. It is the pattern which is as much a straight-jacket as the idea.

(walks over to Voice 2) You Americans don't seem to be as caught up in patterns as we are in Europe. You have had your revolution, while we are still fighting ours. Listen, you can hear it.

Voice I: (standing up) Mr. Verne, I just lived for three months in an insane asylum in New York City, in order to research an article exposing the horrible conditions sick, poor people have to endure in our cities.

**Voice 2:** (points around) All this is an insane asylum. Where else would you find this Krupp gun displayed in a palace of crystal?

Voice 1: Aren't you assuming a different time table? Perhaps the world moves more slowly here, than you would like.

**Voice 2:** Yes, in a social sense. But science is moving very quickly. (changes the subject) I've been called a visionary, but that's not accurate. I only ask myself: "What if such and such a situation should occur, let's say a trip to the moon, or a voyage to the center of the earth, or a race to the North Pole?" And then, to answer my own questions, I piece together what I have read in various current scientific journals. I just use the information I glean more perceptively.

Voice I: (makes a disparaging gesture)

**Voice 2:** By the way, Nelly, "Around the World in Eighty Days" was inspired by a Thomas Cook travel brochure, which pointed out the ease of travel now that the Suez Canal has been opened, and the US has finally built a rail line connecting its two coasts.

Voice I: (laughing): You can't disillusion me, Mr. Verne. I have grown up with your books. And I have looked forward to this interview for a very long time.

**Voice 2:** (putting his arm around Voice I) And you have certainly earned it.

(Lights dim until Voice I and Voice 2 are discernable as silhouettes. Behind them, the walls of the exhibition hall become transparent, and an arctic scene becomes apparent. Flickers of glaciers alternate with the sweep of cold black sea, upon which the white ice floats. Wolves howl, loudly enough to be in the room. But out on the ice, sounds carry far, so that the wolves could also be many miles away. There has been a storm, and through the white curtain which has descended just beyond the room, we can pick out the form of a man struggling through the snow.)

#### SCENE IV:

Scene IV: In the North Pole, anytime

Voice I: Z, a member of the expedition

Voice 2: Jules Verne

Voice I: I don't want to die.

Verne has carried this man, let's call him Z, back to camp, but has released his support too soon. Z falls across the threshold and twists his body, so that the wooden board of the melting snow, catches the small of his back at the base of the spine. The pain causes Z to think that his back is broken. His delirium, and the shock of the impact of falling,

cuts through his last vestige of courage, and he regresses to a terror of death. Verne manages to pull the man into the cabin and shut the door against the wind.

**Voice 1:** Always the wind, always the wind.....

Verne lights the stove, ( stage grows brighter and pulls Z over to its glowing warmth. Then, he lays down beside him. Z begins to describe what happened.)

**Voice 1:** Must keep moving...Tired, so tired. I begged him to get up, but all he wanted to do was sleep. The reflection of the snow was blinding. He was wandering around like a hurt bird...Boots, where are his boot's? He will die without his boots...The wind batters everything. It is impossible to know where to walk. Where is he.....I can't see anything.

( Z and Hatteras were lost during two days of blizzard. As soon as the wind died down, Verne went out to look for them. The two men had planned to explore a glacier, which they had named the Stranger, a block of grey ice and rock to the north of camp, dominating the vast desert of snow. Verne thought that the two men were endangering the whole expedition by insisting on making the climb. But Z and Hatteras, experienced arctic travelers, had been anxious to move around after spending so many weeks aboard the small ship, which had carried them as far north as possible by sea. The expedition was still hundreds of miles south of their ultimate destination, the North Pole.)

**Voice 1:** ( sitting up Z describes how quickly he had realized his mistake), that it was too late in the season to attempt this climb. The snow was beginning to melt. There might be flash floods and avalanches. The gently curving drifts of snow hid crevasses and were deceptive On the first day, we made good progress, and about noon, sat down to rest. The cliffs of the glacier in the distance looked like a waterfall of frozen ice. The wind began to pick up, and Z had the feeling that the glacier had begun to noticeus.: Suddenly, there was a roar like a freight train coming straight at us. The ground began to slip out from under me and I was rolled down a slope and covered with snow. I managed to dig myself out and saw that Hatteras had done the same. We were just a few feet from the edge of a precipice. We both lay where we had landed, testing our limbs, afraid that we would start the slide again. After a time, we began to crawl towards each other. It was good to be with another human being. We decided that we should move on immediately. I still had my pack which held the tent and my bag, but Hatteras had lost everything he carried. We moved slowly trying to get back to camp, until it became too dark to take the chance of getting lost. I half-carried Hatteras, who was more hurt than he would admit. We crawled up a slope, to a more sheltered place and pitched the tent. Hatteras didn't have his sleeping bag, and for some reason kept insisting on taking off his boots. I warned him to sleep on his right side to keep his heart from freezing. Our tent was buried in snow during the night. In the morning, it was like waking up in our tomb. Hatteras barely responded to me, he was curled up like a fetus on his right side. He woke up, but begged me to leave him.....What could I have done?

## SCENE V

Scene V: The Paris Exposition, 1865

**Voice 1:** Nelly Bly

**Voice 2:** Jules Verne

(Lights dim, and we see the two Voices switching places on the see-saw cannon, and the Bly - Verne interview continues)

**Voice 1:** In the book, don't some Eskimos find Hatteras, soon after Z thinks he has left him to die?

**Voice 2:** Yes. Hatteras ends his days in an asylum, still reliving his experiences in the arctic. He is blind, but retains his sure sense of direction - and tries, always, to walk toward the north. ( turns north )

**Voice 1:** ( as if to call him back ): What are you working on now, Mr. Verne? Do you mind me asking?

**Voice 2:** ( pause, quietly ): No, I don't mind.

**Voice 1:** My readers are interested, of course. Perhaps I should have asked, What region of the universe are you currently inhabiting?"

**Voice 2:** I'm back in the arctic, again. This time I'm putting together a syndicate to purchase the North Pole. I'm using the same group of characters from the Baltimore Gun Club that I sent to the moon twenty years ago.

**Voice 1:** I remember. They miscalculated and missed the moon. Why do they want to buy the North Pole?

**Voice 2:** ( laughs ): It's all very hush, hush. One of them discovers that there is a vast amount of coal under all that ice. The Club decides to corner the market - to purchase the Pole in order to mine the coal. A very astute group of men. Attuned to the times, they anticipate a great demand of coal. ( He points around ) Most of the engines displayed in this hall, as the ultimate in technology, are powered by coal.

**Voice 1:** How do they mine coal, if it is covered with all that ice. Wait - let me guess. They develop a drill so powerful that it can bore through miles of ice. ( pause ) No, that wouldn't work. Even if they could drill through to the coal, they still would have to deal with all that snow and ice covering it.

**Voice 2:** ( Looks at Nelly as if to say "you really are not so dumb" ) Very good. That's certainly the line of reasoning that I go through to mine an idea. I'm sure if you thought about it long enough, you would have come to the same conclusion I did...MELT THE ICE! ( pause ) Yes, we melt the ice, in order to get to the coal hidden below. Miles and miles of coal. Enough to power the toys of the world for centuries to come.

**Voice 1:** Whoever possesses the coal, controls the world?

**Voice 2:** Ah, now you have made the leap. That is really what we are talking about, aren't we? The Prussian's, with their long-range guns aimed, right now, at Paris, think they have tipped the balance of power in Europe. Theirs is only a small step twoards what I see happening in the future. ( Gives a shrug of his shoulders, as if to ward off his vision)

**Voice 1:** How do you melt the ice over the coal?

**Voice 2:** I'm tempted to say 'read the book.'



*Kay Marie Jacobson, from the series, "Lost Paradise", mixed media, 24" x 36"*

Voice I: That's not fair.

**Voice 2:** The members of the Gun Club decide to shift the earth off its axis, or, in their words, "Encourage a reorganization of the axis of rotation": Just enough of a change in a rotation to bring the globe into an angle of the sun perpendicular to the plane of orbit. In other words, move the Pole slightly closer to the sun, so that the climate warms enough to melt the ice which has been accumulating for thousands of years.

Voice I: Is that possible?

**Voice 2:** They are a gun club, don't forget. So naturally, they try to develop a gun, or a series of guns, capable of detonating an explosion of such magnitude that the recoil is powerful enough to shift the earth's axis of rotation. They will attempt to move the Pole to about the 67th parallel. A displacement of 23 degrees 28 minutes would be sufficient to melt the ice.

Voice I: Is there such a gun?

**Voice 2:** More essential to their plan is the explosive they invent, which I call meli-melonite. The reaction is somewhat obscure - but it is a blend of certain organic substances with nitric acid. A specific number of subatomic radicals are substituted for the same number of hydrogen atoms and power is obtained by chemical combination.

Voice I: Have you thought about the consequences of melting all that ice? What about flooding?

**Voice 2:** There are many consequences, not the least, flooding. Don't forget we all retain an atavistic fear of floods, dating from the Bible.

Voice I: Noah

**Voice 2:** I'm sure there is some truly geophysical explanation for Noah's flood.

Voice I: Does the Gun Club explode the gun and change our axis?

**Voice 2:** You are perfectly right about the flooding. In my book, people all over the world become outraged at the possibility. The Club builds its gun in Kenya, and they do fire it.

Voice I: What happens?

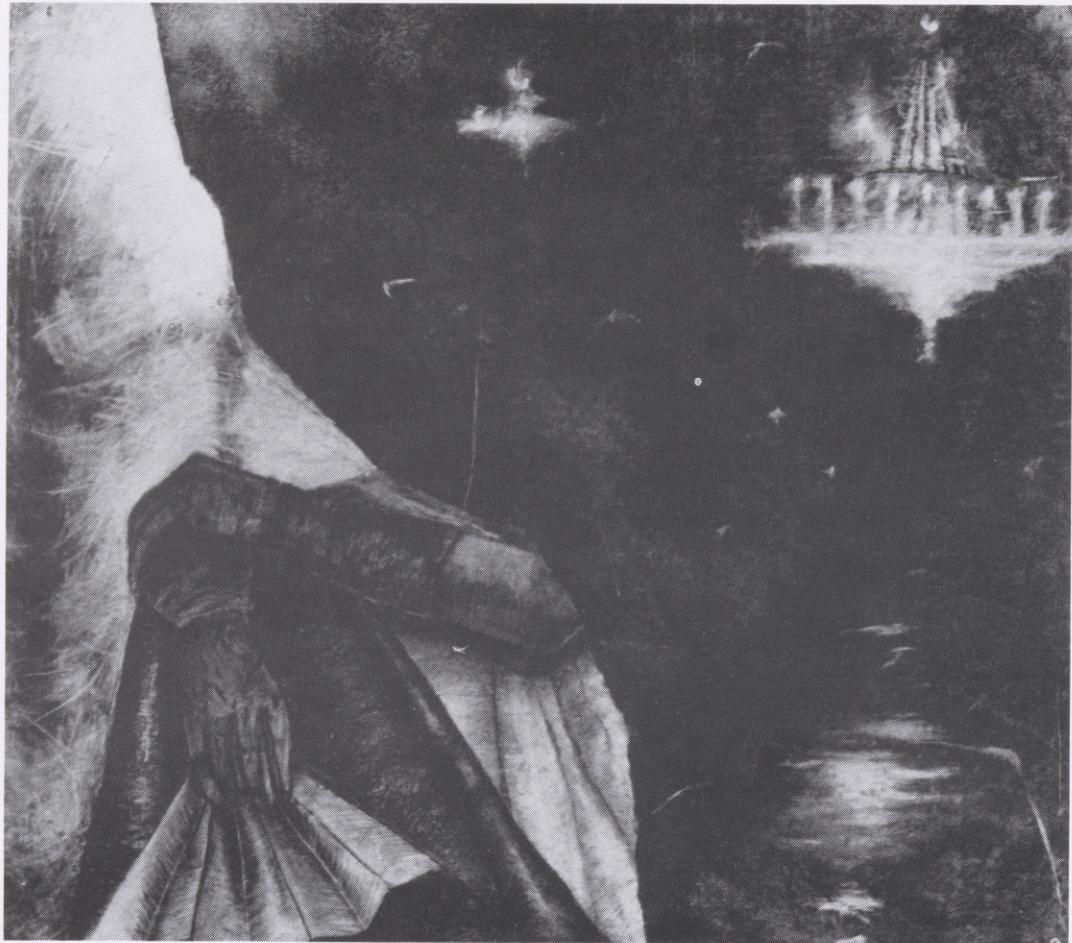
**Voice 2:** Another miscalculation, of course. It seems that their mathematics have not improved with age. Nothing happens.

Voice I: You mean they were wrong?

**Voice 2:** They dropped a digit somewhere along the way. The projectile which they do manage to hurl into space, becomes a minor planet. But that's another story.

Voice I: So the world is safe?

**Voice 2:** ( looks around ) That's also another story.



Kim Rainey, "Untitled", charcoal, 36" x 40"

## The Portrait

*Maria Mihanovich*

I missed the fall this year. Too carried away by the portrait of the Writer. He was an incredible man, like an old tiger, strong and sensuous at the same time. And terribly kind and intelligent. This drew me quite a few times to his house trying to catch his spirit in some sketches. Perhaps I saw the fall through the colour of the leaves in his garden.

I used to swim at the Dclphin Club during the summer, a long summer it was for it included the fall without me noticing it. Everybody thought I was crazy swimming at this time of the year. Except me. I lay in the sand as in the best beach in Hawaii.

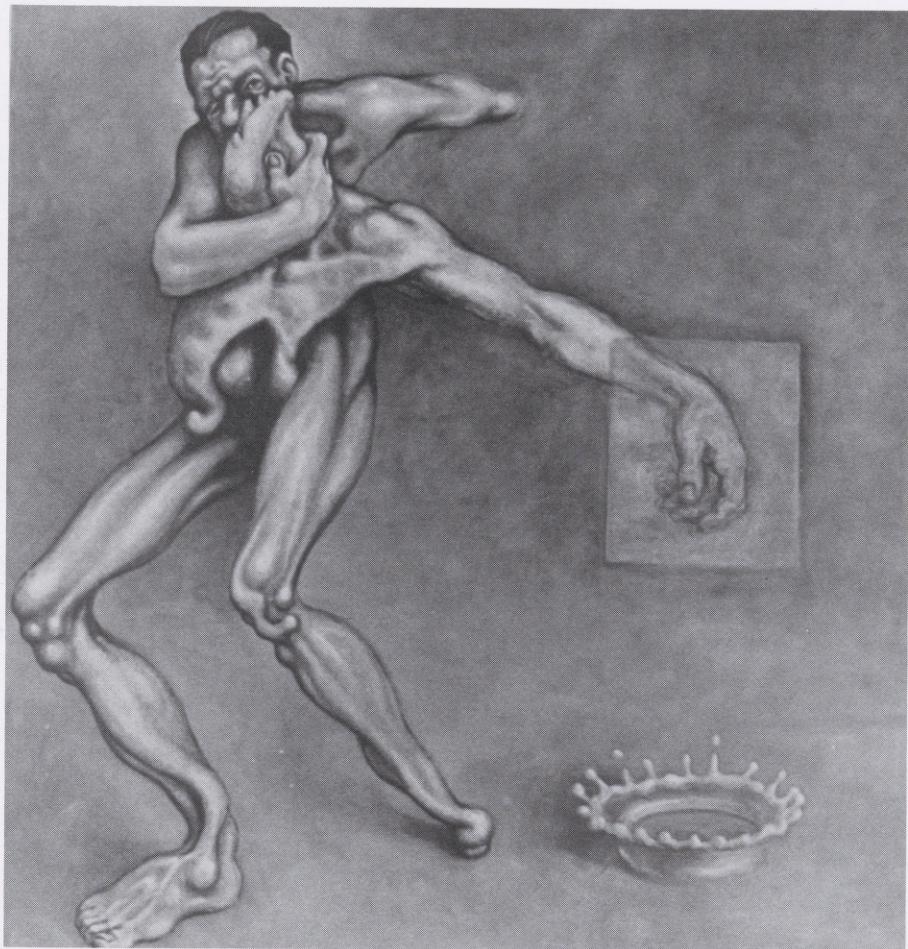
And then this fascination with the Writer, our long talks. He cooked tofu for me and cut lamb legs with an axe. He used to straighten the pictures on the walls. He taught me many things, he knew about everything: film, photography, he even knew about the art of making portraits and he would move, to my dismay, so that I could see all of his angles. It was a sort of acrobatic display. Instead of the camera I pursued him with my easel and

pencil in hand. Ti'll finally I got my camera and took some shots.

With all this baggage of information I proceeded to The Portrait which I did subsequently five times, one after and other, one on top of the other, day and night, night and day. My only distraction was swimming at the Dolphin Club. The water got colder and I didn't realize it, so deeply merged was I trying to bring the tiger out. I used to take a hot bath and a sauna enough to get warm and continue my job. Once I nearly made it but the tiger was still elusive. During those long nights I would get waves of inspiration and all of a sudden mess up all the painting I had been applying consciously during the day and in fifteen minutes a new spirit would emerge; the real Writer. It was like magic.

Till finally I decided to take a trip to the coast. While I was walking towards the sea in my stripped bikini with my suntan lotion I kept meeting people in winter jackets. Suddenly I knew that the fall was over.

*Colin Chillag*  
"untitled"  
oil on canvas, 36"x 38"



**ROCK**.....*continued from page 25*

changed her position and was coming up the other way. She put her fingers in her mouth and pretended to blow, giggling, as the branch lifted her arm higher in the air. "Busting into someone's vehicle and taking off with it?" she asked, smiling. "Not exactly, it's more like he drove me to the edge of a desert and that's where I left him." I watch as she approaches a police car and begins painting the vehicle away with the branch, turning it white then black then perfectly invisible. "Like this," she says, looking at me very closely. I lose my vision for an instant. I wonder about the body I have acquired, I haven't yet looked down, what does it look like, surely not like the drunk's body which had almost made the procedure aesthetically impossible, yet it is difficult to take my eyes from the branch for even a second. The woman holds it even higher. I have the suspicion that the woman is a man wearing a dress. I know, I think, but as I try to connect her to my past which is virtually endless, which is the past of the landscape itself, I come up short until she smiles: "I've come back to work a few things out, to speed things up."

**MORGAN**.....*continued from page 16*

subjected and unique as is each person.

The answer to the question in summary is; yes. There is work (evident) in the studios at SFAI that clearly is made with an awareness of the prevailing climate, or at least the signs there of. It is more a question of internalization, synthesis and response; but the lesson is less about the similarity in look and more about the nature of the substance and context; if semantic games, irony, etc... is ones genre, then understand the rules of the game, otherwise it is all an "affectation"

In more subtle ways the climate of Post Modernism has challenged in part the sense of the pendulum swing from figuration to abstraction. There is no prevailing school of painting that is dominant. For painters with Robert Storr's words in mind, the "impurities" nascent in modernist (Post Modernist?) painting, allows us all to all evolve and contribute through our activities

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